MEMOIRS

OF THE

COUNTESS DE GENLIS,

ILLUSTRATIVE OF

THE HISTORY OF THE

EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

VOL. V.

117

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1825.

LONDON:

IBOTSON AND P[illegible]ER, PRINTERS, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

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MEMOIRS

OF

MADAME DE GENLIS.

THE first month of my residence at Berlin was passed in an enchanting manner; I saw once more all my acquaintances and friends, who discovered even more anxiety about me than on occasion of my first journey; all occupied themselves with endeavouring to amuse me; I was taken to theatres, and parties of pleasure were made on purpose to show me the neighbourhood. We went as far as Sans Souci, where I gathered many recollections of the great Frederick; and as I went over the apartments, of which even the furniture and the ancient ornaments had been left standing, I felt confirmed in the opinion which I had long held, that the sketches and pretended philosophical reflections of certain authors, in which their partisans see so much profundity, are in general

nothing but a heap of follies and falsehood. M. de Volney in one of his works says, that in order to judge properly of the disposition, the inclination, and the character of mind of a person who no longer exists, of whom he had never heard any thing, and with whom he had never had any connexion, it would be quite enough for him to be present at his inventory, and to examine with *philosophical attention*, his furniture, his clothes, his ornaments, his books, &c.; because all these things by their solidity or their frivolity, would give him a complete idea of the personage. Consequently, if M. de Volney, that profound thinker, had been transported into the apartments of Frederick the Great, as he would have seen nothing there but furniture and draperies of rose colour and silver, engravings and mythological pictures, a collection of the most fragile ornaments, and all the trifles of the French shops; as he would have found in the library an infinite number of licentious works and frivolous poetry, he would certainly have imagined the defunct, of whose name we will suppose him ignorant, to have been a young Sybarite, altogether destitute of merit and talent; and yet this young Sybarite was an old warrior, the greatest Captain of his time, the most vigilant and laborious of monarchs, who, even amidst his rose-coloured

draperies, slept always in his boots. This is the way in which these gentlemen have judged so often, and judged without appeal!

Most of our modern travellers have adopted this method of judging, which in truth is very convenient; for if a superficial glance is sufficient to enable them to judge of a subject in all its bearings, much time and fatiguing research are necessarily spared. It results from hence, that a journey is only a collection of conjectures. To ancient travellers nothing seemed requisite for their task but good sense and veracity; but ours require a penetration which is quite admirable. It is not astonishing that we should paint faithfully what we have thoroughly examined; but it is wonderful to give a just and precise idea of what we have only guessed at. For myself, who am only a very ordinary traveller, I am resolved never to judge by induction; I shall give an example of what happened to me in consequence of doing so. I had heard that the Protestants, who were enemies of all decoration in their worship, never adorned their churches with vases of flowers. Having been a few days before at Hamburg, I was walking alone one evening in the environs of that town; I saw about me several pretty gardens belonging to the peasants which were joined together, and bounded only by

a little hedge. I entered one of these gardens, which was filled with vegetables with the exception of a little square plot covered with charming flowers, very carefully cultivated. I knew enough of German to ask a few questions, and to understand a few phrases. I congratulated the honest woman who received me on her taste for flowers; to which she replied, that she reared them for the church. Surprised at this, I cried out—"What! for the church?"—"Yes," replied she, "these flowers are intended for nosegays for the church, and you will find the same in all our gardens." This was positive enough; however, in order to leave no doubts on the subject, I entered five or six other gardens. I saw every where the same plots of flowers, and from every one I received the same answer with regard to their use. On returning home, I wrote in my journal that the peasants of this country had a pious practice, which I should like to see among Catholics, and that the churches of Hamburg as well as our own were adorned with flowers. If I had left Hamburg the following day, I should have always maintained that opinion and left the error standing in my journal. Some days afterwards I went into a Protestant church, in the persuasion that I should there see many vases of flowers. I saw none,

but there were a great many country girls who carried nosegays in their hands. I was with a native of Hamburg, to whom I addressed some questions on the subject. The Hamburger replied "All these peasants carry bouquets to show that they have *a property*, that they possess at least a little bit of ground. Accordingly in every garden they cultivate a plot of flowers as *bouquets for the church*. Those among them who have no property, would not venture, in this solemn place of assemblage, to wear a bouquet; and the proprietors would not allow them to do so. Accordingly, flowers here are marks of honour, and those who wear them do so to gratify a singular kind of vanity." After this explanation, I effaced from my journal all my fine reflections on the piety of the Hamburg peasants, and all I had written about the church bouquets. This proves how much travellers should be on their guard against appearances, and how easily, in a foreign country, we may be deceived and pronounce erroneous judgments, even in cases where we believe ourselves to have made all the necessary inquiries.

I return to Frederick the Great. The person who conducted me to Sans Souci was granddaughter of M. Jordan, the intimate friend of Frederick the Great, and whose fortune the prince

made through gratitude for the proofs of interest he had shown in his fate during his exile and disgrace, while as yet only Prince Royal. This great prince was on all occasions the most grateful of men. We heard several traits of the monarch and his court of another description. The three following seem to me so pleasant as to deserve to be related. When the king made short excursions he was in the habit of carrying Voltaire with him. In one of these Voltaire was alone in a post-chaise which followed the king's carriage. A young page whom Voltaire had some days previous caused to be severely scolded, resolved to have revenge; accordingly, when he went before to cause the horses to be prepared, he told all the postmasters and postilions that the king had an old monkey, of which he was so very fond, that he delighted in dressing him up like a person belonging to the court, and that he always made this animal accompany him in his little excursions; that the monkey cared for no one but the king, and was extremely mischievous; and that, therefore, if he attempted to get out of the chaise, they were to prevent him. After receiving this notice, all the servants of the different post-houses, whenever Voltaire attempted to get out of the carriage, opposed his exit; and when he thrust out his hand to open the carriage-door, he

always received two or three blows with a stick upon his hands, accompanied with shouts of laughter. Voltaire, who did not understand a word of German, could not demand an explanation of these singular proceedings; his fury became extreme, but it only served to redouble the gaiety of the postmasters; and a large crowd constantly assembled in consequence of the page's report, to see *the king's monkey*, and to hoot him. Throughout the journey, things passed off in this fashion; but what completed the anger and vexation of Voltaire was, that the king thought the trick so pleasant, that he refused to punish the inventor of it. Thus the vengeance of the young page was complete.

The passion of the king for music is well known One evening when he had just gone to bed, he thought he heard a charming symphony played at a distance. He rose, opened the window, and found to his surprise that this *pianissimo* music in two parts, proceeded from the watch-box of the sentinel on duty below his apartment. He called the sentinel and questioned him; his astonishment was redoubled on hearing that it was this soldier who produced the illusion by playing at once, and in the most beautiful manner, on two

Jews' harps. The king, astonished at such a prodigy, commanded the soldier to come up to him. To this the soldier replied, "I cannot—I must wait for my countersign."—"But I am the king." —"I know it; but I can only leave my place by order of my colonel." On hearing this the king was at first angry; but the sentinel told him that if he obeyed, he would cause him to be punished next day for a breach of discipline. The king then praised his firmness, shut his window, retired to bed, and the following day sent for the soldier, listened to him with admiration, and presented him with fifty fredericks and his discharge. This musician of a new description made a great deal of money by going over all Germany. Some years afterwards I heard him at Hamburg. He went to play in the houses, and when he played he required all the lights to be put out, and then you thought you really heard a fine symphony sounding in the distance.

Another trait of a less generous kind, but which proves also the passion which this monarch had for music, is an anecdote relating to our famous Duport, the first violoncello player in Europe. Being sent for to Berlin by Frederick, he counted on remaining there five or six months only. The

king hearing that he was preparing to depart, charged several of his musicians to give him an entertainment and to make him drunk. When in this condition, he was made to sign with his own hand, an engagement, by which he entered one of the king's regiments in the capacity of a drummer; so that he could not leave Prussia without exposing himself to be punished with death as a deserter. It was thus that this great artist was fixed in Brandenburg. He was at first excessively enraged; but a large pension and an excellent marriage soon consoled him. He was an inhabitant of Sans Souci together with his family when I went to visit that royal residence. He returned to France after the revolution, a few years after me, and I heard him play on the violoncello at the *Concert Spirituel* with the most brilliant success. He was then seventy-seven years of age.

It was in the course of my second visit to Germany, that I saw represented for the first time a German tragedy, called *Octavia, the wife of Mark Antony*. The following is a narrative of this singular representation. The curtain drew up, soft music was heard, and you saw in a beautiful Egyptian, or Roman, or Grecian bed (I am not sure which)—but a bed with curtains elegantly raised on festoons, and half open; you saw, I say,

Antony and Cleopatra, in bed and asleep in each others arms, under a superb covering of purple. In a moment Cleopatra awakes; she looks at Mark Antony, kisses his forehead, and rises. The music then ceases. It would appear that the queens of Egypt were in the habit of sleeping with their clothes on, for Cleopatra gets out of bed, lightly attired it is true, but wearing the dress in which she appears throughout the first act. She calls her women, not however that they may assist at her toilette, but in order to talk to them about love. During this conversation Antony, who, as it would seem, sleeps very soundly, at length awakens, and on getting out of bed, begins to talk to Cleopatra of his passion. Such is the exposition of the piece. The third act presents a scene equally decent and a great deal more singular. The virtuous Octavia comes to seek her faithless spouse; and penetrates to the apartments of her rival, whom she finds tête à tête with Mark Antony. The latter, instead of discovering any embarrassment, harangues his wife and mistress at once, and melts the hearts of both. He then takes both of them into his arms. The two rivals in this situation, melt into tears, and mutually embrace. Antony, as spouse and as lover, enjoys with transport that noble and touching union; he presses

them to his bosom, and embraces them both in his turn. This is a novel scene, and embellished with sentiments of no ordinary kind!

I ought to mention, that the bed * of Antony and Cleopatra shocked the public, and was omitted at the second representation of the piece; but no other part of the scene was changed. However, instead of a bed with curtains, a sofa was placed on the stage, still covered with the purple coverlid: the lovers, as before, lay in bed asleep; but as there was no bed, all the spectators were satisfied, only the prudes murmured *sotto voce* that they would have been better pleased with an armchair than the sofa. This outrageous rigour would have been carried too far, if it had been yielded to; it would next have been demanded that Antony and Cleopatra should pass the night together sitting on stools. True wisdom never lies in extremes—so *the sofa remained on the stage.*

I once saw at Paris the first representation of an

* The following is an interesting anecdote on beds:

The King of Sweden, a short time before his tragical end, fell from horseback, and broke his arm: when he was cured, the middling classes of Stockholm devoted a sum to maintain for ever at the Royal Hospital a certain number of beds, where fractures of the arms and legs were treated gratis. These beds were called beds of *Loulais*, in memory of the Camp of Loulais, where the king's accident happened.—*(Note by the Author.)*

Octavia by M. Marmontel. There were some fine scenes in it, but towards the conclusion, a personage, telling Augustus, in speaking of Cleopatra—" *Sire, she is alive !*" *—the audience burst into laughter, and the piece failed. Perhaps, had it not been for this ridiculous speech, the tragedy might have had a run. I can easily conceive, that a very clever man may write a very weak piece ; but I cannot conceive a clever man of letters leaving in his work a line absolutely ridiculous, at a time when our taste and tongue are completely formed : such a thing might have happened to Corneille, but hardly to Racine. The *Thébaïde* failed, because the tragedy was weak in style and interest : but even in it is to be found the germ of the admirable talent of its author ; his elegance, his nobleness of manner, and his sensibility ; and it does not contain a single ridiculous expression. †

The affection of Mademoiselle Bocquet for me seemed to increase daily, and lasted all the summer, and part of the autumn. My *Little Emigrants* ap-

* *Seigneur, elle est vivante.*

† There are some ridiculous expressions to be found in Corneille, but the language was not then formed. This kind of creation was owing especially to Racine, Pascal, Bossuet, &c.—(*Note by the Author.*)

peared, and met with the utmost success. My health nevertheless continued languishing; I had in my head the plan of the Rival Mothers, but I had not strength enough to begin the work. I wrote during this time my *Heures à l'usage des jeunes personnes.* It was at this time that there arrived at Mademoiselle Bocquet's from the extremity of Russia, a pupil of such a singular description, that I cannot avoid speaking of her here. She was six years old, and had an air of vivacity and intelligence: she could not utter a single word, excepting some infantine phrases in the language of her country. She was examined by the first surgeons of Berlin, who unanimously declared, that nothing but her own will prevented her from speaking; and that their opinion on this head was confirmed by the absence of all deafness. She was so intelligent, that she could express all she wished by means of her gestures and the features. Mademoiselle Bocquet bethought her of converting her into a spy, and learned from the child in great detail all that passed in the class in her absence: this produced among the scholars infinite disputes, for each accused the other of being the informer, being far from suspecting the *little mute* of being the real criminal. As at this time Mademoiselle Bocquet told me every thing, she entrusted me

with this secret, and I found great difficulty in keeping it, the rather as I was convinced that the little girl indulged herself in exaggeration and malice in the reports she made. This infant so extraordinary in her way, represented to my mind a *little enchanted princess;* she furnished me with the idea of my tale called *le Maillot sensible et raisonnable,* which I first wrote for Mademoiselle Bocquet, to whom I gave the MS. and afterwards, on the same foundation, I wrote a second, which I published.

Mademoiselle Bocquet had sent me a physician, who gave me great quantities of drugs, which did me much harm. One of my friends, uneasy at seeing the condition to which I was reduced, and my daily declension in health, took me to M. Zell, the first physician to the king, whom I consulted: he told me that if I had delayed two or three months longer, I should have fallen into a condition from which no treatment could have relieved me. He advised me to throw all my medicines out of the window, and to eat no other thing than carrots for two months, taking daily a spoonful of horse-radish in my soup. This regimen in fact, which I had the courage to prolong for two months, saved my life, and restored me to health. I saw that Mademoiselle Bocquet was angry with

me for having quitted her physician; but another cause produced a great coolness between us. I have already mentioned that she had a sister-in-law, called Madame Bocquet, the wife of her brother. I easily remarked that Mademoiselle Bocquet did not love her; and when she saw that I was pleased with her, she told me many bad things of her: she could say nothing about her conduct, which was that of an angel, but she assured me that she was excessively deceitful, which was a most unworthy falsehood. On the other hand, Madame Bocquet never spoke to me of her sister-in-law but in terms of eulogy. This different conduct began to give me a very bad opinion of Mademoiselle Bocquet's disposition: a very trifling incident made her break with me. It is usual in Germany to make mutual presents at Christmas: Madame Bocquet, who had already conceived a lively friendship for me, presented me with *Young's Night Thoughts*, on the first page of which she had written the words, "*I love them enough to offer them to you.*" She gave me besides a charming little cane, (then called a *badine*,) with ornaments in gold and enamel, which, like her own, was adorned with a little crooked chamois horn, and a band of gold, enamelled with blue round the cane, on which were engraved in letters

of gold, the words *Doux présage*, in allusion to the following fact: the first time I saw Madame Bocquet, when she advanced to salute me, her little cane fastened in my hair so firmly, that we could not separate ourselves: this was the origin of the pretty device on the cane which she gave me. I was delighted with these two presents; I spoke of them and praised them with the vivacity which is natural to me. Mademoiselle Bocquet abused them with a fury which was quite inconceivable, and her jealousy was heightened by seeing that Madame Bocquet came twice a day to visit me. This ridiculous conduct did not lead me to forget all the kindness which Mademoiselle Bocquet had shown me. I wished to explain matters with her, and tried to soften her anger, and recall her to reason; but she replied to my endeavours with a fury which confounded me. Never was there a love more exclusive and less reasonable: I requested M. Mayet our mutual friend, to speak to her, but nothing would make her hear reason; she required me to break abruptly with Madame Bocquet, and to refuse distinctly to receive her at my house. I was far from disposed to yield to a whim of this kind, and from that moment Mademoiselle Bocquet looked upon me with horror. I still persisted in thinking that with a little patience I

should succeed in restoring her to reason; besides, I could not quit her house on the instant, because by our agreement, I was bound to pass three months more with her. She went so far in her fury as to excite dissensions between Madame Bocquet and her husband; and had become altogether so bitter and so violent, that under pretence of the austerity of my regimen, I determined on eating in my own room. Upon finding this, she thought it unnecessary any longer even to keep upon decent terms with me, and went all lengths in her ill treatment. She caused several pretty articles of furniture which she had purchased from me to be removed from my room; and a large and handsome coverlid, quite new, made of silk and stuffed, she replaced by an old one of cotton full of patches. I was then living on carrots and soup, which till this time had been cooked with all possible care. The soup was now changed into water with a little grease in it. But, it would be too long to detail all the persecutions of this kind which she made me suffer: there was one however to which I was more sensible than to all the rest; she desired Jenny to quit me, and ordered her to take the place of school mistress in her house. Jenny was well qualified to fill such a place: I had completed her in a knowledge of writing and orthography, and

she owed to me the talent of reading aloud admirably, and reading even verse well. I had given her lessons in history and in flower painting, in which she made great progress. Jenny replied firmly, that nothing on earth would ever induce her to quit me voluntarily. "Well then," said Mademoiselle Bocquet, "you shall quit her by force." Jenny was a Catholic in her heart, as I have stated: and it has been seen, that faithful to my promise, I had no share in her conversion: she had as yet given no public proof of her Catholicism: it was still a secret between us. Nevertheless, Mademoiselle Bocquet assembled a family council, in which it was juridically decided that Jenny should be removed, because her religion was endangered by remaining with me; this resolution was communicated to Jenny, who courageously replied, that if her family persisted in removing her from me, at least they had no right to prevent her from returning to Magdeburg, her native place, to the care of her two elder sisters, of whom the youngest was twenty-six, and who lived by working embroidery. Mademoiselle Bocquet now got into a fearful state of fury; Jenny, in spite of her natural mildness and timidity, showed no symptoms of terror; her vexation at the thought of quitting me, gave her super-

natural strength. Mademoiselle Bocquet ended by telling her that she would not give her money to go to Magdeburg; upon this I gave her what she required, and moreover all the furs and lined clothes I possessed, for we were then in the midst of winter: and she quitted us, to the great surprise of Mademoiselle Bocquet. This separation cost us both many tears; and I only found consolation for my loss in the friendship of Madame Bocquet. I was truly unhappy; having no attendant, deprived of my dear Jenny, being no longer, as I may say, waited on by the servants belonging to the house, who had orders to do nothing for me but to light my stove twice a day, and to bring me a large piece of bread, and a plate of raw carrots for my daily food; for I had now given up the greasy soup furnished me by Mademoiselle Bocquet. I myself dressed my carrots with plain boiling water, and except for Madame Bocquet, this would have been my sole food; but she came to see me twice a day, and brought me potted meat, jellies, and delicious little rolls. So many disagreeable things, in spite of my excellent regimen, rendered me very unwell for three weeks: I was troubled with painful boils, which made me suffer cruelly; one of them I was unable to attend to myself, but the angelic Madame Boc-

quet charged herself with dressing it twice a day. Mademoiselle Bocquet would not allow me to have a waiting maid or companion.

I had another friend who was very agreeable and interesting; her name was Mademoiselle Itzig; she was twenty-eight years of age, and had been blind from fourteen, in consequence of having had an operation for the cataract ill performed. Having had all the best masters up to the age of fourteen, she had retained a passionate fondness for music; her voice was charming, her style of singing most agreeable, and she accompanied herself on the piano. We performed a great deal of music together; and as she was endowed with uncommon intelligence, I undertook to teach her to accompany herself on the harp, and to play little airs; in this I perfectly succeeded. It was for her that I invented the little harps of ten and twenty chords, to exercise the fingers in a carriage, and on all occasions; this produced a rapid progress in her. Madame Bocquet often brought with her one of her friends, the Countess of Thadden, lady of honour to the queen, who was young and handsome. She had a husband, fifteen years older than herself, who was subject at every change of season to fits of raving madness. Madame de Thadden had been married seven

years, yet no one suspected the malady of her husband. She herself waited on him, along with an old valet-de-chambre, without being afraid of his transports; it must be said, however, that he always recognised her, and that she could appease his fits by speaking to him. No one suspected his disease; it was only thought that he was often ill; when his fits were over, he was extremely quiet. But the malady afterwards increased so much, that towards the end of my residence at Berlin it had become publicly known; and once he had so furious a fit, that after having broken his bed in pieces, he attempted to throw himself out at the window. Madame de Thadden and the servant, being unable to restrain him, cried loudly for assistance; all the servants immediately rushed in, and beheld him in that condition. It was thus that the admirable conduct of Madame de Thadden came to be discovered; all the rest of her behaviour accorded with this heroic devotion to her husband.

Mademoiselle Bocquet knew only a part of her sister's attentions to me. There were two entrances to my lodging, the one through the rooms belonging to Mademoiselle Bocquet, and the other by a little private staircase belonging to my cabinet, which led into a little corner of the court, out of sight

of the windows of Mademoiselle Bocquet. We conducted our connexion with great mystery. Madame Bocquet came to see me when she called on her sister two or three times a week, and only once in the day. At other times she came to me by the little staircase. For a long time, Mademoiselle Bocquet, who now paid me no visits at all, thought that her sister-in-law only saw me when she came to pay a visit to her; but afterwards she learned, through some of her spies, that we passed almost the whole of our days together; she then did all in her power to persuade her brother that this was improper, but, fortunately, in vain. The spring came to free me from all these persecutions, of which I have not recounted the half. I received money for my *Dialogues or Itineraries*, which I had composed for the use of the emigrants; the only answer worthy of me, to all the anonymous libels of which I was the object, and which appeared to every one so noble and touching, that from that time no one has ventured to write against me. This work was esteemed so useful in Germany, that it was determined to employ it as an elementary work, for teaching French in all the schools.

In speaking of anonymous writings, I had written one myself, but the motive of it was esti-

mable. I had read in the public newspaper, that Messrs. Suard and de la Harpe were persecuted, and obliged to conceal themselves, in order to avoid death or deportation. Messrs. de la Harpe and Suard were by no means my friends: I had rendered several services to the former, and we had quarrelled a long time before—that is to say, six years previous to the revolution; but the situation of these two persons touched me so deeply, that the desire of being of some use to them led me to conceive the idea of composing a little work, called *The Friend of the Arts and Talents*. The name of a woman would only have had the effect of diminishing the weight of my reflections: I therefore concealed my name. The work was printed and sold at Paris, in order that it might be ascribed to a French citizen. I took for the motto the following lines of M. de la Harpe:

Beaux-arts, c'est pour vous seuls qu'aujourd'hui je vous aime!
De mon cœur, de mes jours, vous êtes les soutiens,
Je jouis des travaux qui surpassent les miens.

I subjoin some fragments of the work.

*   *   *   *   *

" A sanguinary despotism has for a long time deprived us of the greatest part of the useful and

agreeable talents which once embellished France. Her artists exiled themselves. The muses, friends of peace, went to seek her under foreign skies; it was thus, that in former days, chased by the Furies, they escaped from Greece, and fled to seek for refuge in another climate. In France, Robespierre, with the poignard in his hand, forbade them to return, denouncing them as *Emigrants*, and depriving them of all their possessions; but their real property is their glory, which cannot be confiscated, which is carried with them into all countries, and of which persecutions only serve to heighten the lustre.

* * * * *

"At that fearful epoch, what were my terrors for the artists and the men of letters I once knew! Alas, I trembled even for those who have since given me proofs of their hostility! when I reflected on their danger, I thought only of their talents. *The Friend of Literature and the Arts*, in these days of proscription, had no right to think of his enemies, and could only regret his judges. Where is he who would enter upon his career with enthusiasm, if he were sure to find himself without antagonists? It is the fear of being surpassed, which gives wings in the course; and the

palms of victory derive all their value from the hands which distribute, and the rivals who dispute them.

*   *   *   *   *

"In these disastrous times, I wept for the harmonious poet who celebrated our gardens! . . that illustrious poet who was inspired by the genius of Virgil, as Pope by that of Homer! I saw Delille dragged to prison; I fancied him plunged into the depths of a subterranean dungeon, and my imagination represented him to me, deprived of the light of day, and of hope, reciting his admirable lines on the *Catacombs of Rome!** . . . Thanks to heaven, he has survived the tyrant, and I have since seen with joy, a name so dear to the muses, on the list (alas! how short) of the men of letters who remain to us.

*   *   *   *   *

"If the conquerors and chiefs of nations, who have shown no respect to the material monuments produced by the arts, have in all ages been reckoned barbarians, what shall be said of the fero-

* This poem (as well as several others of the same author) was not yet printed: if he had died, we should have lost at once the poet and his works; for, trusting to his memory, he never wrote out the verses he composed, till he sent them to the press.—*(Note by the Author.)*

cious men, who destroy the very inventors of these arts, and those who cultivate them with success labour to advance them? In the most remote periods, great talents were always so fortunate as to have the power of disarming anger, hatred, and resentment. Ancient fable and history equally prove how far the ancients have carried this sentiment of respect and admiration. Homer, in tracing the blood-stained scene of the vengeance exercised by the implacable son of Laertes, represents this cruel and vindictive prince, as softened by the sounds of the lyre of Phemius, and sparing in his wrath only that famous musician. In history we find the workshop of Polignotus protected even by the enemies of his country; the house of Pindar respected by pillaging soldiers; Marcellus, entering as a conqueror into Syracuse, yet honouring the memory of the man whose genius had rendered the siege so perilous and so difficult,* and appearing inconsolable at the news of his death; and the all-powerful Augustus, outraged in the most sensible manner, but limiting his vengeance to the exile of the seducer of his daughter. To this indulgence we owe the best works of Ovid, which were composed after that period.

* * * * *

* Archimedes.

"In modern history we find a number of similar traits; we know with what generosity Charlemagne, the admirer of the talents of Paul the Deacon, forgave the boldness of his answers, and his attachment to the family of Didier. Every one knows the touching testimony of esteem and admiration which the enemies of Louis XIV. and of France bestowed on Fenelon, when having penetrated into our provinces, and ravaging agreeably to the horrible rights of war, the country they had overrun, they spared nothing but the lands and possessions of the author of *Telemachus*.

"The man who possesses great and well-directed talents, does not belong only to the country which witnessed his birth; every place where the arts and sciences are cultivated, have a right to claim him, when his life or liberty is menaced in his own country; if he is guilty towards her, exile should be his punishment! but what barbarity there is in an attempt upon his life! What! the glory which surrounds him, his past labours, and those which are to come—all these motives for admiration, gratitude, and hope—are they to have no weight in his defence or acquittal? . . . Benefits which will be transmitted to the remotest posterity, from the *chefs-d'œuvre* which he bequeaths to you, and which you will see revived in your theatres,

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S S.M.

in your monuments, in your museums, and your libraries! . . . If the great Corneille engaged in a conspiracy, had perished on a scaffold, what sentiment would you feel at the representation of *Cinna*, *Polyeucte*, and *The Horaces*?

"All learned and literary men, and all artists distinguished for their successes, have a right to the same indulgence; and even without having attained this high point of reputation, it is sufficient for them to have entered with honour into the career. Who knows to what point they may not arrive? Milton, when he had only written some agreeable works, entered into the service of the Usurper, Cromwell, and profaned a pen destined to immortality, by writing a disgraceful apology for the assassination of kings. Charles II. on ascending the throne, generously granted him a pardon, and Milton afterwards wrote the *Paradise Lost*. Of how many delightful works and admirable discoveries should we not have been deprived, if in all ages men of letters and learning had not received more respect than ordinary persons? Without such clemency which public gratitude seems to render a duty, in England, Prior would have died in prison, and the famous Chancellor Bacon would have perished on a scaffold. Finally, would our age have profited by

the greatest and most useful discovery which has been made in physics, if at the beginning of the American war, the English government had put a price on the head of Franklin, and had found assassins in consequence?

"Let us observe besides, to the honour of literature and the arts, that in general the acquisition of great talents is a pledge of good morals; so much time is necessary for perfecting and cultivating them, that none is left for vice and intrigue. Can we separate from sound literature the study of morals? Ah! who can love virtue better than he who has passed his life in reflection upon the duties of man? An excellent moralist and writer may doubtless err; but there will be nothing in him to pardon, but venial errors, not a long series of criminal or vicious actions.

* * * * *

"Virtue, when joined to genius and talents, is the genuine support of power. . . .

"It is the arts that have immortalized the grand ages of Pericles, of Augustus, of Charlemagne, of Francis I., of the Medicis, and of Louis XIV. Let us remember, that it was neither by means of terror, nor by according new privileges to the patricians, that the second of the Cæsars appeased the fury of the triumvirate; a warrior without

talent, and even without courage, a barbarous tyrant, stained with the blood of his fellow-citizens, he subjugated his country, he sacrificed without remorse to his ambition, public virtue, liberty, and humanity; yet he obtained pardon for all these crimes—what do I say? . . . he was even beloved! He usurped the glory as well as the empire of the universe. It was because, when seated on the throne, he knew how to pardon, and because he chose for friends Mecænas, Virgil, and Horace.

* * * * *

"Ah! for the happiness of my country, I pray that those who now govern it may restore to literature and the arts, the dazzling splendour with which they shone under the famous prince, who owed the surname of *Great*, not to his conquests, but to the enthusiasm of grateful muses!"

* * * * *

I still form the same wish, and with better reason for hope, under the reign of a monarch more justly beloved than the Roman Emperor, since his life was always as pure as his disposition is magnanimous. What friend of the arts desires not to see restored to his country an old man, who would always have been the honour and glory of the French school, even if he had produced no-

thing but the inimitable picture of the vow of the Horatii! I may venture to say, that I blamed him loudly at the period of his errors; but he is unfortunate, he is in exile, he is groaning under the weight of age and infirmities; and I now see in him only his misfortunes, and his sublime talent. Every thing, in short, recalls him to my fancy, when I admire the great talents of his scholars; yes, the numerous *chefs-d'œuvre* of Gerard, of Guerin, of Girodet, and of Gros, seem to entreat his recall; and the glory, the conduct, and the sentiments of these illustrious artists give them, on a question of this kind, the most touching right to be heard.

Among the most ardent of my enemies, ranked a personage who was not at all my enemy through party feeling, but only because I had *spoken very ill,* as he said, *of his master, Jean Jacques Rousseau,* whose devoted disciple he was. His name was the Chevalier de Meude Monpas; he wrote a great number of articles and verses against me. His poetical talent may be judged of by the following little piece in verse, which he composed in order to account for his excessive sensibility:

Je vais conter l'histoire singulière,
Qui m'arriva dans le sein de ma mère.

I omit six lines here, in which he states that his mother bore in her womb three twins—himself, his brother, and his sister. He then proceeds thus:

> Mon frère étoit d'un commerce farouche;
> Ma triste sœur n'ouvroit jamais la bouche;
> Je m'ennuyois . . comme un triste héritier;
> Un jour enfin, fatigué du métier,
> Je poignardai mon frère et cette belle;
> Je fis cela sans leur chercher querelle:
> Car il vaut mieux assassiner les gens
> Que de propos les fatiguer long-temps.
> Si ma conduite aux yeux paroît immonde,
> Avois-je alors quelque usage du monde?
> Mais poursuivons . . Quel étoit mon dessein?
> D'avoir *trois cœurs* . . Je fouillai dans le sein
> Et de ma sœur et de mon triste frère.
> (Ah! quel fracas pour ma dolente mère!)
> Je m'emparai du cœur de chacun d'eux,
> Croyant par-là me rendre plus heureux;
> Funeste erreur? . . je l'éprouve sans cesse,
> Tout les tourmens viennent de la tendresse, etc.

The birthday of Mademoiselle Bocquet occurred a short time before our separation. As people generally receive on such occasions presents from their friends, I sent her a handsome silk coverlid stuffed, telling her that I presented it to her because such things seemed to be rarities in her house; I gave her, besides, an elegant set of

breakfast china, with two silver salt-cellars. I had remained a year in her house, and had been perfectly well treated during nine months; and the rate of payment was so moderate, that Mademoiselle Bocquet must have been a loser rather than a gainer by the bargain; unless, indeed, the treatment I had experienced for the last three months, might have reimbursed her, for my fare could not have cost the sum I paid her. She received my presents with extreme surprise, but she accepted them. The evening before my departure, a scene occurred which almost put her out of her senses. There resided at Potzdam a lady exceedingly rich, called the Countess of Schmalensee, to whom I was not at all known, but who wrote to me to say, that she was in want of a companion, who should at the same time be qualified to act as governess of her children; that she wished to have one of my recommending; that she was to be between thirty-five and forty, and that she begged me to send her such a person; at the same time she described to me in detail the condition on which she was to be received, which were very lucrative and advantageous. I immediately thought of Jenny; I replied to the letter, and proposed her; and though she was but nineteen years of age, she was accepted. Upon this, I requested in

my reply that she should be sent for to a place, the name of which I mentioned, and which was three leagues distant from Berlin. I wrote to Jenny, who accepted my proposal with much gratitude, and who came to the appointed rendezvous. In the morning there arrived at the door of the boarding-house, a grand coach with six horses, which stopped before the house of Mademoiselle Bocquet; the latter, together with several of her pupils, came to the window, and their astonishment was extreme on seeing Jenny descend from this handsome carriage. Jenny first entered her aunt's apartment, and told her, with a triumphant air, all her good fortune, declaring that she was doubly happy, as she owed it to me alone. Mademoiselle Bocquet remained in a state of consternation, and Jenny ran into my room, threw herself on my neck, and burst into tears. I wept, also, heartily; and the meeting was so much the more pleasant, as Madame Bocquet was in my room, and partook with all her soul our emotions and our satisfaction. This adventure caused Mademoiselle Bocquet so much vexation and surprise, that she was ill in consequence of it the whole day.

At the time fixed for my departure, which was the next day at noon, I entered the apartment of

Mademoiselle Bocquet, to bid her farewell; I thought at the moment of all her kindnesses of former times, and it was not without emotion that I entered her cabinet; but the icy coldness, or rather the rudeness with which she received me very soon checked my first emotions, which might have rendered the interview very touching, if she had wished it. Nevertheless, I embraced her; she looked at me with eyes glaring with anger. I hastened to withdraw; and she had not even the politeness to follow me to the door. I crossed the drawing-room where I saw three of her pupils, among others, Mademoiselle de Gerlach, the charming young person of whom I have already spoken; she threw herself into my arms and burst into tears. At this moment we heard Mademoiselle Bocquet pull all the bells violently; the sound alarmed me; so I made my escape, and hastened as quickly as I could to join Mademoiselle Itzig, who waited for me in the carriage; she carried me beyond the town, at a small distance from the gate of Silesia, to a splendid royal establishment, where cannons were made. There were very handsome apartments in this place; Mademoiselle Itzig procured me the use of some charming rooms on the first floor, very elegantly furnished, and which were entirely and freely at

my disposal for four months. I fixed myself in this place with a new companion of fifteen years old; and we were very well served by the wife of one of the artillery, who besides cooked for us. This woman was young and handsome, and I became attached to her; I observed that she constantly wore a *green petticoat;* she had a green petticoat for both week-days and Sundays; she told me that she owed *to a green petticoat,* her marriage and her happiness, and that she had determined always to wear one; she then told me her story, on which I founded my novel, entitled *Ida, or the Green Petticoat.* Of this story, M. Radet has made a very agreeable *vaudeville,* which is still performed. In the course of my emigration, I have found several other subjects for *vaudevilles.* M. Parandier, one of my friends who returned from Dresden, told me the story of the tomb of Mademoiselle Bause, over which an unknown hand had daily strewn flowers for two years. On this incident I have founded a novel, entitled *The Funeral Flowers; or, Melancholy.* I have furnished M. Fiévée with several subjects for stories; among others, those which he has called *Vengeance and Innocence.* The first is the history of a lady of Sleswig; and the second, that of a young and most amiable emigrant French

woman, of the name of Mademoiselle Filhon. I heard from her own lips her singular story, into which M. Fiévée has put much talent, as into all he has ever written; but an anecdote of this kind rather required simplicity. My fancy is so romantic, that frequently the slightest incidents have furnished me with subjects for my novels. I have already related the adventure of the rose, (which I saw float by on the Alster,) an incident which I have introduced into the *Mères Rivales*.

I passed five months in the handsome apartments which had been given to me; I was quite near Mademoiselle Itzig, who occupied a charming house close to my rooms, with a superb garden, where I went every morning to walk; besides this, I was surrounded with delicious promenades, which lay open to me through the woods and the neighbourhood of the town. Mademoiselle Itzig and Madame Bocquet came always alternately to take me in a carriage with them; I used to make excursions of three or four leagues, and sometimes more. I paid a visit to the château of the Count de Voss, where I heard, for the first time, a ravishing concert. If the same scheme were universally adopted, it would give the country inexpressible charms. The plan was to form

the cows into flocks, and to hang round their necks harmonic bells; these formed, in the most beautiful manner, perfect major concords, in several octaves, both high and low. No one can form an idea of this delicious harmony; when it is at a small distance, it forms a celestial music, of which the irregularity and the sweetness act so powerfully on the imagination, that it is impossible to listen to it without the most lively emotion.

I was, moreover, taken to see the interesting tree of the refugees, existing at the time of the revocation of the edict of Nantes; it is entirely covered with touching inscriptions, expressing each writer's love of his country, and his regret at having quitted it. I was told, with reference to this subject and the refugees, a touching trait, of which I ascertained the exactness. These refugees had resolved on giving to the villages, in the neighbourhood where they had fixed their abode, the names of several places in France; and these *patriotic nicknames* had been fixed upon most of the villages. I saw, also, in my excursions, and with great pleasure, Potzdam, its marble palace, &c. I recovered, in the course of that summer, all my former taste for botany; I went with my little companion to herborize in the woods; opposite our house, there lived a person who sold little

cakes; of these I bought some from time to time, in order to give them to the idle boys about the streets, who, through gratitude, followed me in troops to the woods; this was extremely agreeable to me, as they gathered for me heaps of plants, which I had great pleasure in carrying home to paint from, and of which I composed a herbal.

One evening, in returning from my promenade, I met a little girl on her knees cutting grass; her head was bent down, and her beautiful fair curled hair hid her face entirely. I stopped to speak to her, upon which she lifted her head, threw back her hair, and showed me the most beautiful face possible; I questioned her, and learning that she was very poor, and that her parents lived only two hundred paces off, I begged her to conduct me to their cottage. I there saw, in fact, very poor peasants; I requested them to allow their daughter, two or three hours a day, saying that I should have a little dress made for her; to this they consented joyfully. The infant was eight years of age; I told her that if her disposition pleased me, I would take charge of her, take her with me, and educate her. From the period of my emigration, I had always wished an infant with me, and not to have one, seemed to me the greatest of all human privations. The child came

regularly to me; she was extremely mild, and beautiful as an angel; I became passionately attached to her, and at the expiration of a fortnight, I begged her parents to give her up to me. They accepted my proposal without hesitation; it was agreed that she should go to sleep with her parents as long as I remained in the country, and that I should take her with me entirely when I should remove to Berlin; in the mean time, I furnished her with a complete suit of clothes, which I sent in a little box to her parents' house.

About this time, I met with a very disagreeable adventure, which distressed me exceedingly: one morning my little companion requested leave to go to Berlin, promising to return in time for dinner; to this I consented; but she did not return even in time for bed, and I remained for two days entirely alone in my large rooms, without hearing a syllable about her. At length I received a letter, informing me that she was in prison for robberies thoroughly proved against her; and that she had said, on being asked who she was, that she was my daughter. I went to acquaint Mademoiselle Itzig with this ridiculous story; she charged herself with answering for me, and making inquiry into the facts. From this inquiry, it appeared that the girl was in reality a thief; she was at

length tried, and condemned by the tribunal to be shut up in a house of correction for three years. I looked out for another companion, and M. Delagarde, my bookseller, immediately gave me his niece, a young person of eighteen, extremely agreeable, and with whom I have always had every reason to be pleased. On the day following her arrival, while we were in our saloon, of which the windows looked out into the street, we heard a carriage with six horses stop opposite our door; Mademoiselle Delagarde looked out of the window, and saw that the carriage was entirely loaded with flowers in cases and pots, and baskets of fruit. We envied the person for whom so handsome a present was intended; only one man was in the coach, who descended from it, and a moment after rung the bell at our door. My joy was extreme, on learning that it was *to myself* that all these fine things were destined; they were sent to me by the Countess of Schmalensee, the lady with whom I had placed my dear Jenny. The latter, who was beloved by that lady as she deserved to be, had requested her to make me this superb and charming present; both the flowers and fruits were grown in hot-houses, and of admirable beauty. I gave almost all the flowers to Mademoiselle Itzig, but Mademoiselle Delagarde

opposed my liberality as regarded the fruits, which formed, as long as they lasted, the luxury of our breakfasts.

I laboured while in the house at my Romance, called the Rival Mothers, of which in the course of four months and a half I wrote the greater part; I had sold it before hand to M. Delagarde; our bargain was at the rate of 100 francs per sheet, of which he had given me some part in advance. I did not suppose it would extend beyond a thick volume, as I had stated to M. Delagarde. It happened that the work was lengthened to two, and I was afraid that the bookseller might imagine that I had drawn it out only on purpose to have a pretence for demanding more money. I could not bear this idea, and told him that I only demanded the value of a volume of three hundred and seventy pages: he was exceedingly surprised at a mode of proceeding in which delicacy was carried to such a height that it might be called folly.* Such has always been my conduct with regard to booksellers; theirs has been generally very different towards me, with a very few exceptions.

Towards the end of the autumn I returned to Berlin; on my departure I asked for my little pea-

* Afterwards, in an edition published at Paris, I added another volume.—*(Note by the Author.)*

sant girl, who was to accompany me: but her parents declared I should not have her unless on condition of my making them a present of sixty gold Fredericks. It was impossible for me to pay that sum; accordingly I did not get the child, which I greatly regretted: I regretted also somewhat the clothes I had purchased for her. I determined on hiring lodgings at Berlin. A person of my acquaintance, Madame Michelet, undertook to show me several: we saw at first two sets of apartments, of which the latter appeared to Madame Michelet so charming, and the price so reasonable, that she insisted on my taking it, though I by no means agreed with her in opinion. She threw into her decision such a tone of authority that I was offended, and very wrongly, not reflecting at the moment that she could have in view no other interest than mine in the matter: but that interest was shown in a somewhat angry manner. Accordingly I persisted in refusing the rooms, at which Madame Michelet was excessively displeased. However, we went to see some others; they were on the third floor, and she was so breathless on reaching them, that she did not even attempt to conceal her ill humour, but most unjusty abused the apartments; upon this I praised

them outrageously, and took the lodging to the great vexation of Madame Michelet.

The woman of whom I hired the rooms had two little boys; the eldest who was eight years of age struck me by the beauty of his face and the nobleness of his demeanour; he became attached to me, and came every day unto my room. I undertook to teach him French by means of my *itinerary*. He had uncommon quickness: in the course of four months and a half he understood the language, learned by heart verse and prose, and recited without accent. I requested the mother to commit the boy to my care, telling her that I should bring him up in the Catholic faith; she consented to my proposal, not only without resistance, but seemed charmed at giving him up to me: I carried him along with me, and named him Casimir, after the son whom I had lost.

I laboured hard to finish the *Rival Mothers*, a work which I composed in eight months and a half, which I regard as a prodigious exertion; but at the same time I found myself so completely exhausted that it was impossible for me to think of writing for a long time. Nevertheless it was necessary for me to think of making some money

arrangements, as I had only cash enough to last me for a very few months. Counting that I could always write, I had entered into a good many expenses, such as clothes for my little girl, my establishment at Berlin, the purchase of all that was requisite for my lodgings, and that of several things for my own use, among others a handsome repeating watch. I had had no watch but a little silver one for several years. I had given that which I brought from France, together with the chain and all the seals to my nephew, Cæsar, who had lost his at an inn. I was determined neither to borrow nor to get into debt in any way. I resolved, therefore, by way of resting myself to give lessons: it was in vain that my friends offered me loans without fixing any terms for repayment—I constantly refused. I looked out for four scholars, and found them immediately, at a price till then unheard of at Berlin, where the most expensive masters received only half-a-crown a lesson; I received a decat, that is to say ten francs (eight shillings sterling); I taught my pupils to read French in verse and prose, to recite poety, and to write letters. It was proposed to me to open a course of literature, and I should have had the use of a very handsome hall, for the purpose, which would have cost me nothing; I might have

had an infinite number of subscribers, and might have gained a great deal of money; but my repugnance to put myself forward was invincible. I felt better disposed to give lessons in my own room. I had the offer of several pupils for the harp, but these I refused, being satisfied with those to whom I was teaching literature. I ought here to name the persons who were particularly kind to me. The chief among these were Madame Bernard, equally full of talent and goodness; Madame Herz, the wife of a physician, beautiful as an angel, and remarkable for her amiable disposition and her wit; Madame Cohen, wife of a very rich merchant, and M. Lombard, brother of the king's private secretary, who was of a refugee family; he was then only twenty-one, and his face was charming; he had a passionate taste for literature and the arts, a great many agreeable accomplishments, a solid and subtile understanding, and great aptitude for writing the French language. The reading of my works had inspired him with so great a prejudice in my favour, that in the very first lesson I gave him I could not help being embarrassed, and the more so, as I wished to pretend I did not perceive his sentiments; but his agitation and emotions augmenting daily, I believed I should succeed in changing their nature,

by telling him, as if undesignedly, that I might very well be his grandmother, seeing that I was *fifty-four years of age*; he was extremely surprised at this, for I had the appearance of being much younger, and he supposed me not more than forty or forty-two: but he made me a compliment even on my advanced age, saying that my youthful air made me altogether a *unique person* on the face of the earth.

Madame Cohen, who was still young and handsome, but dropsical, was on the point of undergoing the operation of the puncture: as she never quitted her sofa, I went to her house to give her lessons: her son, sixteen years of age was present at our conversations, which were very amusing to me, inasmuch as Madame Cohen was extremely amiable in her disposition, and supported her pains with unalterable patience, and a gaiety which was delightful. She sent her carriage for me, and after the lesson was over, she kept me with her all the rest of the day. I took advantage of her acquaintance with young Lombard to put an end to my *tête-à-tête* conversations with the latter, to whom I declared, that in future he must come and take his lessons at the house of Madame Cohen, and in company with her. This arrangement in no respect altered his sentiments, of which

the expression became so visible that every one remarked it: but in spite of their singularity, his feelings were too serious to allow Madame Cohen to venture upon turning them into jest. At this time I became acquainted with a man who had made a journey to Berlin, and who was truly extraordinary for the diversity of his talents; his name was M. Ploetz; he was at once the principal painter in enamel, and first mechanician to the king of Denmark; besides he was a great musician, and played with perfection on the viola. He had invented along with the famous Viotti a new manner of noting music, infinitely more simple and more commodious than that now in use; by this method pupils might learn to read the notes much more easily, and at the same time more quickly: he had also a kind of instrument which produced only a thin sound, but of incomparable strength and beauty. He had placed this instrument under ground in several parts of the gardens belonging to the king of Denmark's country house; and among others under a bridge, when in walking over it you touched a certain plank of the bridge it formed this sound, which lasted as long as the foot remained upon it: I constructed upon this invention the novel entitled, *The Harmonious Tomb.* M. Ploetz was in other

respects exceedingly estimable and clever; he presented me with several specimens of turning which he had made, and which were *chefs d'œuvre* in their way. I gave him a miniature representing a very beautiful Magdalen, copied at Rome from a picture by Guercino.

My friend Mademoiselle Itzig had been, as I have stated, blind from the age of fourteen, and she was now twenty-eight. Her greatest source of uneasiness was, not being able to write without the intervention of a third person to a sister she had at Vienna. I bethought myself of the little machine by which Madame du Deffant wrote without the assistance of any one: I explained its construction to M. Ploetz, who made one exactly resembling it, which I presented to Mademoiselle Itzig. This caused her infinite joy, as it enabled her sometimes to write private letters to her sister: I made her make use of the machine under my own eyes; she had not forgotten her orthography, but she scarcely ever wrote the last syllable of her words; this reminded me of what I had read in a collection of Voyages, about an Englishman who was found on a desert island, and who, after remaining there fifteen years had forgotten to pronounce in speaking the last syllables of the words he used. It was in my book of

Souvenirs, that Mademoiselle Itzig insisted on tracing her first written lines. I performed a great deal of music along with M. Ploetz; this rendered the evenings I passed at the houses of Madame Cohen and Mademoiselle Itzig extremely agreeable.

I also frequently saw Madame Bocquet; whom I introduced to Madame Cohen, in order to have an opportunity of passing more time with her. We went very often to walk in the gardens belonging to the Princess Henry, and the princess expressed a wish to know me. When this was communicated to me, I replied with all possible respect, but positively declined the honour of being presented to her. I acted in the same manner to all foreigners who came to Berlin, with the exception of artists. I have always thought that when our fortunes are completely fallen, we can only preserve our dignity by avoiding exposure, by making advances to none, by meeting only those of friendship, and by living in the profoundest solitude.

The life I led at Berlin was extremely agreeable; my friends and pupils loaded me with attentions; my rooms were always crowded with flowers, and filled with fruits, pots of jelly, Dresden butter, excellent pastry, beautiful straw baskets, and others made of a thin kind of osier peculiar to that

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country. Young Lombard added to all these gifts a thousand things made by himself, which he sent me in baskets or in pretty boxes. On my side, I acknowledged these presents by returning the fruits of my labour, in the shape of drawings, embroidery, or artificial flowers; and I gave Madame Cohen among others, a very handsome mahogany box, beautifully mounted, and embellished with six paintings by myself, representing fruits, insects, and animals; I have never done any thing with more care, or better finished.

I received a letter from Philadelphia from the Prince of Talleyrand. This letter pleased me so much, that I have carefully preserved it among several others. This is the substance of it:

"Any letter which reaches one in America is a benefit; when it comes from a person one esteems it is a treasure; judge then of the extreme pleasure with which I received yours.

"Separated from all that is interesting to my heart, I engage myself only with the ideas which may lead me to regain what I have lost, never to lose it more; to live with those who are dear to me independent of the rest of the world, and form with a few friends a little world to ourselves, impenetrable to all the folly and wickedness which reign at present in unhappy Europe. The condi-

tion of my mind is now much as you have always known it, neither more full of hatred, nor more violent than in general. I scarcely think of my enemies; I am only busied with re-establishing my fortune, and to this end, I exert all the activity which can be inspired by the employment I hope to make of it, in which my imagination finds food for hope, and all the sweeter emotions. Among the sentiments which a man wants in order to be pleased with himself, must rank the feeling of independence; and it is now my daily task to become so. If I succeed I ought to regard my present years as the most useful of my life, and to rank myself in the small number of those whose fortune has fallen in pleasant places.

"This country is a place where honest men may prosper, though not, to be sure, quite so well as rogues, who, as may be expected, have many advantages on their side. I wished to write and send you something about America; but I soon saw that it was a senseless project. I shall defer the few observations I intended to have made to the conversation which I propose having in the long evenings I hope to pass with you hereafter. America is like all other countries. There are a few great facts known to every one, from which a Copen-

hagen cabinet may guess at the whole of America. You know the form of its government; you know there are large and immense tracts of inhabited land, where you may obtain a property at a rate which bears no proportion with the price of land in Europe; you know the newness of the country; no capital, and yet great ambition to make fortunes; and no manufactures, because labour is and must long remain too dear. Combine all this, and you are better acquainted with America than the majority of travellers, including M. de L——, who is here making notes, inquiring for authorities, and writing observations, and who is a much greater bore with his questions, than the inquisitive traveller described by Sterne.

"My health has been tolerable, notwithstanding the rigours of the winter, and the changes of weather, which passes suddenly to the mildness of spring, and thence returns to ice and snow. These changes are incessant; the insalubrious heats of Philadelphia oblige me to pass the summer at New York. Happy, say you, is the country where the inhabitants desire to avoid maladies and the natural causes of destruction. In many parts of Europe, violent causes of destruction are so frequent, that we ought to count for but little, whatever only follows the order of nature.

"I await here with impatience the work which you mention, together with some miniatures which you allow me to hope for, which will afford me the highest pleasure. You may address any thing to *Mr. John Parish, American Consul, Hamburg.*

"Is your friend Henriette still with you? Be so good as to remind her of me, and to tell her that I continue to be tenderly attached to her. My age, and the intervention of a revolution, allow of tender expressions, which at another time, I should not venture to employ. Receive with kindness the assurance of an attachment which will attend you at all times, in all countries, and under all circumstances. I entreat you to write to me; let there be plenty of proper names in your letter, and let that of Madame de Valence occupy a large space in it. I wish your engagements led you to inhabit Denmark, rather than any other country in Europe. It is the kingdom where most probably I shall fix myself; but on this head I am as yet undecided. The only thing certain is, that as long as the war lasts, I shall continue in America.

"I beg you to send me a seal."

Hearing about this time that Pamela was at Hamburg, as she did not wish to remain in Ireland

after the tragical death of her husband, I wrote to her to request that she would come to Berlin, and reside there along with me. The heroic manner in which she had behaved throughout the unfortunate affair in which her husband was involved, and the purity of the life she had led during the five years of her marriage, had, if possible, augmented my esteem for her. Her reply gave me great pain; she refused positively to come to me. I did not at all look for this refusal; and my false reckoning on the occasion afflicted me greatly. By redoubling my activity, I sought and found relief from my grief. I did not write, but I played a great deal, and I never in my life made so many trinkets; my address in this way became so celebrated, that a Berlin merchant who had the finest shop in the town, for the sale of all kinds of things, offered to give me four thousand francs a year if I would work two or three hours a-day for him, under the view and with the assistance of two young persons whom he would send to me every morning; and even more if I gave him new inventions. This I did not accept, as I was desirous of returning to France. This was the second opportunity I had of living by the labour of my hands independently of music and literature; for at the beginning of the revolution, I had really lived in

this way at Altona. During the first months of my residence in that town, I painted flowers and mosaics on paper as patterns for the cloth made at a manufactory there.

A short time before leaving Berlin, I went to visit a synagogue. The person who showed it me was a man much distinguished in his sect for his fortune and his knowledge; he pointed out to me all the antique ornaments, which were mostly of pure gold covered with precious stones, and all at once he said: "I am sure, Madam, that you regard with indignation all those things which are held sacred by us."—"No, Sir," I replied, "on the contrary, I look upon them with respect, as being the origin of the truth." This reply charmed him; he related it everywhere, and it was cited as an instance of great presence of mind. There happened to me about this time an accident singular enough. One day, on reading the list of books sold at Leipsic, I saw one announced under the title of *Catéchisme Moral*, by the Countess of Genlis. The title itself of *Moral Catechism*, satisfied me that it was the fruit of our modern philosophy; and it was in fact a doating effusion of anti-religion by M. de Saint Lambert. It was pleasant enough to find such a production attributed to me. The booksellers at Leipsic, in

order that it might have a better sale, thought proper to put my name on the title-page. I sent a disavowal of the work to all the German newspapers; I was equally anxious both on account of my principles and my pride of authorship, to disavow so contemptible a book.

Monsieur and Madame Cohen had a passion for private theatricals, and they had a pretty little theatre in their house: they entreated me earnestly to compose a little piece for them. I felt better in health, I was very anxious to accede to their wishes, and I began by writing a proverb, which we acted in our room, entitled *A bon Entendeur salut*.* It was founded on the true history of an adventure which had formerly happened to M. le Comte de Roquefeuille: what gave me the idea of making use of that story was the circumstance of the timidity of the young person who usually played proverbs along with us: she begged me to give her very short parts, and I promised to give her one which should be the principal character, and in which she would only have to say *a single word*. I performed in that piece the part of the hostess. I wrote another comedy called *Les Lutins de Kernosi*: I took the original idea from a story of Ma-

* Or *Minuit*.

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARAS

dame d'Aulnoy: it has never been printed; but on my return to France, I gave the manuscript to M. Radet, who made a Vaudeville out of it. Lastly, I wrote also at Berlin my *Galatea*, which is to be found in my works. We played these three pieces: the Baroness Grothus, by means of my instructions, played in a delightful manner the part of *Galatea;* I myself acted *Eurimone.* I did not perform in *Les Lutins de Kernosi;* but Casimir, who had only been learning French for four months, played the part of a valet, which was very long, and absolutely essential to the piece: he played it with a grace and intelligence which delighted every one; and the more particularly, as he declaimed without the slightest accent. What chiefly surprised *me* was, that he added from his own head several traits of character and pleasant *bons mots.* I played on the harp in this piece, accompanying an air which was to be sung by a young person; but, concealed behind a curtain, at the moment she was to sing, her voice failed her through terror, and she declared it was impossible for her to form a sound: upon this, as I was out of sight, I took the opportunity of singing the song myself. No one suspected it, but all thought that it was Mademoiselle Hagedorn, and I was applauded to the echo: it was the last time I ever sung in pub-

lic. These little pieces succeeded so well, that they were performed several times. Young Lombard, whom I taught to perform, played with talent, and in the most agreeable manner: we performed the *Mariage Secret*, in which I acted the part performed by Mademoiselle Contat: the celebrated Iffland came to witness our performance, and he had the politeness to say of me, that I was the best actress he had ever seen. There came also to our performance several princes of the royal family. I had never been seen but in a very careless dress; but when I wore rouge and ornaments, it was impossible to recognise me at a little distance; and strangers would not allow me to be more than thirty. All these successes heightened M. Lombard's sentiments for me to a pitch of folly: he wrote regularly subjects of composition which I gave him, and which I corrected. He told me that he wished to choose himself his own subjects, because those I gave him were too serious; he said also, that being desirous of forming his epistolary style, he would write letters to me. The next day he sent me one which expressed the most passionate love: it was not difficult for me to divine to whom it was addressed, but I pretended to take it for a letter intended for an imaginary person, and merely told him that I begged him in

future to write in another style; he replied, that he would not cease to write in that manner until I should teach him how to please in it. Our discussion ended by a positive order against it on my part, and a decided rebellion on his.

In the mean time, General Beurnonville arrived at Berlin; he came often to Madame Cohen's, and displayed a great interest in my fate. It was a rare thing for a fugitive to receive testimonies of goodwill from a French republican; but I was as sensible to them as if I had deserved to be exiled from my country. I explained to him my situation: he saw easily that I could not be reckoned an emigrant, and that by not allowing me to return to France, all the constitutional laws were violated in my person. He promised to write in my favour, and he kept his word. I wrote myself to Paris, and had soon reason to hope for a recall: a short time previous, M. de Finguerlin on returning from Poland, called on me, and told me that he had been near Warsaw, at a delicious country-house called *Arcadia*, belonging to the Princess of Radzivill, and that he had there seen at the extremity of the park, a charming house, newly built, furnished with the greatest elegance, and embellished with a garden filled with *hearts' ease and sensitive plants*: on the front of the house

were inscribed these words—*The Asylum of Madame de Genlis.* He added, that the princess had caused the house to be built after reading my *Epistle to the Asylum which I may seek.* On hearing this, I wrote an epistle in verse to the Princess of Radzivill, to thank her: she replied by a charming letter, in which she requested me to come and inhabit *my house* without delay: she sent me at the same time a blank book magnificently bound, which I preserved: I made of it a *Religious Souvenir*, and gave it to Casimir.

Madame Cohen had a fine country house at Charlottenburg, where I went to pass several days: I had given up my pupils, because the money due to me from the sale of my works had now been paid, and my health was re-established: but I continued to give gratuitous lessons to Madame Cohen and to young Lombard; the latter, aware that I was about to return to France, fell into such a profound melancholy, that he had the jaundice in consequence. Madame Bocquet and Madame Cohen could not bear the idea of my departure. As the latter was to undergo in a few days the operation of piercing, she entreated me to pass with her the rest of the time I had to remain at Berlin. I consented, and took Casimir along with me; and first, we went to pass a few days at Charlot-

tenburg. One day when I was in the garden with Madame Cohen and Casimir, the former went into a hot-house with Casimir to pull figs. She left me in the garden, and as I was tired of waiting, I went and walked out into the fields, where I met with seven or eight vagabond boys, who asked me in a very insolent manner for some draërs (a small coin.) I had none, and consequently refused: they called me all kinds of names, and pursued me to the house, flinging stones after me: one of the largest hit my hat. I picked it up and brought it with me, and showed it to Madame Cohen, who was still in the hot-house with Casimir. I told her my adventure, and in a few minutes turning to look for Casimir, I found he had disappeared; I supposed he was in the garden, and called him, but in vain: upon this we returned to the house, but did not find him; the servant told us that he had gone out. I became uneasy; Madame Cohen shared my disquietude, and followed by two servants, we went to the place where I had been attacked by the boys; there we found Casimir who had beaten them, and put them to flight. He remained master of the field of battle, and we saw the vagabonds he had conquered running away on all sides. There were two among them who were twelve or thirteen years of age.

Casimir, all red and full of animation, came up to us, telling me that he had avenged me, but that he had taken care to hit none of the boys on the head. I called the boys, but they refused to return; however, the two servants brought them back by force, with the exception of two, whom they could not catch: we addressed them to prove that they should not throw stones when they demanded draërs, and I gave them a crown to console them for Casimir's victory.

We returned to Berlin on account of the operation on Madame Cohen, which was performed next day. I held her in my arms all the time it lasted: the operation is not painful, but it exhausts the strength. When the operation was over, the patient fainted; she languished much for a few days, but afterwards recovered her health, and judging by her face and shape, it would never have been supposed but that she was thoroughly cured. This terrible disease is very common at Berlin, as well as the stone. During my residence at Berlin, there was performed an operation for the stone, which was very remarkable, and which took place on the uncle of Madame Bocquet: he died of it. The stone which was taken from his body was as large as a lemon: it had the colour and form of it, and even the little protuberance which

is to be seen at one of the extremities. It appeared so curious, that it was demanded for the Royal Cabinet of Natural History; but the widow refused, wishing to preserve it *through sentiment*. I was desirous of seeing it: Madame Bocquet took me to her aunt's, who preserved it under a glass on the chimney. We were greatly surprised at the kind of sensibility which prompted a person to keep always in her sight a thing which had occasioned the death of her husband; nevertheless, that person had always been the best of wives, and sincerely regretted her husband, who had been always the object of her affection.

I was now only occupied with the thoughts of my return to France; I received a letter from my daughter, which informed me that I was to be immediately recalled. I communicated this information to Madame Cohen, who burst into tears, and told me she would certainly die if I quitted her. She represented to me that nothing was as yet stable in France; that my religious sentiments had made me many enemies in a country where religion was abolished; and that I exposed myself to many persecutions by returning. One day, her feelings broke out in an astonishing manner: she had very handsome diamonds which she never wore. She brought me her jewel case, and showed

me all her diamonds, which I had hitherto seen but partially, when she lent us some of them to act our parts. As she saw me admiring these handsome jewels, she said, "Well then remain with me, and I will give them to you." I was so astonished that I was motionless with surprise, and could not reply for some time. Supposing that her offer tempted me, she redoubled her entreaties; it was in vain that I softened my refusals by protestations the most sincere of the tenderest friendship: her grief was so lively, that it rendered the rest of my stay with her very disagreeable. M. Lombard discovered a kind of affection much more unreasonable; the poor young man in his folly seriously proposed to me to marry him: as it was useless to talk reason to him on the subject, I simply told him, (which was true,) that I had made a vow never to marry again. His despair was so great, that every one perceived it, and discovered the cause. He wrote me daily letters in which he called me *barbarous*: my only reply was sending them back with corrections in the style. This put him frequently into an inconceivable fury: he brought back several, which he entreated me to preserve, and which I have still. This singular correspondence by letter lasted till my departure. This extravagant passion not only embarrassed me by its

absurdity, but the extreme disproportion of our ages, and the genuine maternal affection which I had for him, gave his love in my eyes an air of incest which rendered it quite odious to me.

I experienced another vexation: my correspondence with Mademoiselle d'Orleans was broken off. I believe I have already said, that having sent her in a letter a little miniature, representing on a blue ground a red and a white rose in a green box, the Princess of Conti said that they were the three colours, and consequently a revolutionary sign. In vain Mademoiselle d'Orleans represented that the colours were five, seeing that there were also brown stalks and green leaves. The Princess of Conti persisted in her idea, and forbade her to write to me. Mademoiselle d'Orleans found means of at once obeying and of letting me hear of her: she confided her vexation to her confessor, begging that pious person to write, which he did punctually from time to time during more than eighteen months. I sent him my letters, which he remitted to Mademoiselle; but at last he was obliged to go to Vienna. Mademoiselle wrote to him while in that town, and our correspondence lasted in this way for six months; but, at the period of which I speak, I received a letter from a person who was unknown to me, and who re-

commended not to write again to that priest, because he was just dead. I mourned his death sincerely, especially as afterwards I received no news of Mademoiselle d'Orleans.

By a singular chance I received at this time a letter, which ought long before to have reached me, and which, by a singular chain of circumstances, remained long on the road, a thing which then occurred frequently. I even received several of a date greatly posterior; but the latter so deeply touched me, and discovers so completely all the goodness of heart and disposition of Mademoiselle d'Orleans, that I place it at the precise epoch when it procured me so much consolation. It relates to the death of her unfortunate father, which I had concealed from her, and which she did not discover till a few days after our separation.

The following is the manner in which she expresses herself:

"Fribourg, 10th October, 1794.

"Oh!—my beloved friend! to what a pitch of misfortune has heaven reduced me! Alas! I know evils of all kinds! Ah! what griefs—what sufferings has not my unfortunate heart experienced! how cruel is such a life! But religion, and my own heart, my beloved friend, oblige me to sup-

port it for the sake of those I love; it is theirs, not mine, and I preserve it as a trust which they have confided to me. Alas! it is only the dear objects which I love so tenderly that have power to attach me to existence. Oh, my friend! do you imagine that those who are altogether unhappy, and who do not lay violent hands on themselves, can be unsupported by religion?—No, I cannot believe it: without such an all-powerful motive, who would not rid himself of an existence rendered unhappy at each moment? But thanks to the principles you have given me; be not uneasy my dearest friend, God sustains your unfortunate Adèle, and gives her supernatural courage and strength. My aunt shows me a tenderness which touches me deeply, and softens by her excessive goodness as much as in her power my terrible and cruel situation. Adieu, my tender and beloved friend; I embrace you with all the tenderness of my unhappy heart. I cannot at present write to you a longer letter, but my next shall be a long one. Let me have the pleasure of hearing from you often; alas! I have daily more and more need of it!"

Before quitting Germany, I must supply an interesting fact which I have omitted: while I was

at Sielk, I learned that my two pupils were in the number of *detenus* at Marseilles. I sent to the Directory the following brief memorial, which I caused to be inserted in several German journals:

"One of the things which doubtless ought to contribute more than any thing else to render the new government as respectable as the best citizens desire, is that it should always act upon the principles of the strictest and most invariable equity. The certain mark of a really good government is, that nothing is ever asked for in vain, whoever it may be that invokes it. A friend of humanity ventures then with confidence to raise her feeble voice in favour of two young and unfortunate beings, whose misfortunes, whose present situation, and whose age, render them equally interesting. Why are the children of Madame d'Orleans still in prison? why, when their mother, their aunt, and the citizen Conti have been set at liberty, are they retained in captivity? When they were imprisoned, the eldest was but seventeen years of age, and the second thirteen: why is this cruelty exercised towards them? and why, lastly, when the gates of their parents' dungeon have been thrown open, has it been thought allowable to close theirs upon them? No one has been afraid since the

death of Robespierre to manifest a just and tender interest in the daughter of Louis XVI; and are these unfortunate children to inspire less? They have experienced the same misfortunes, they have deserved them as little, and moreover, as long as they were at liberty, they have constantly shown the greatest patriotism, and in the army the greatest courage. Nothing can justify the treatment they have received; and we ought to expect from the justice and the humanity of the government that it will no longer defer restoring them to liberty; or at least, if it refuses to grant them their rights as *citizens*, let them be exiled from France to the place they may choose; for banishment would be a benefit in comparison with such a captivity."

During their imprisonment, the young Count de Beaujolois, who was little more than a child, performed an action well worthy of being related: he had formed along with his brother a plan of escape; all seemed to succeed. After having secured a small vessel ready to sail, they plotted their escape at midnight out of a very high window with cords, which they found means of procuring. The Count de Beaujolois passed first, and reached the ground without injury: he ran to the vessel, but looked in vain for his brother. The commander of the

little bark impatient of this delay, insisted upon sailing before break of day. Touched by the earnest entreaties of the Count de Beaujolois, he deferred his departure for a few minutes longer; but at last he weighed anchor, and the Count de Beaujolois, unable to determine on parting without his brother, voluntarily sacrificed his liberty, and even risked his life to rejoin him. He found him stretched on the ground with a serious wound: the cord had broken, and the unhappy prince had fallen on the ground and broken his leg. The Count de Beaujolois took him up in his arms, and called for help. They were again put in prison and guarded more strictly than ever.

The Count de Beaujolois, that charming and interesting prince, who displayed so much talent, and who at an early age discovered such a noble mind, was not quite twelve years old when I left him in France to go into a foreign land. He was under my care from the age of three; I felt towards him like a mother; he wrote to me several times in the early part of my exile. The following is the last letter I received from him; it is very infantine, but it is most precious to me.

"You led me to look for a letter, but I have looked for one in vain. I am constantly writing,

but no one replies to me; I am like a deserted person. I have just been writing to my sister; but I know not whether she will receive my letter; it is very disagreeable: one does not know on what to reckon. It is now three months since you went away, and you don't think of returning; M. Aillon is surely not gone yet; if he has been unable to go, and you should come yourself to prevent him—Oh! how glad I should be! but I will not weary your patience longer. Good bye, my dear and tender mother, whom I love more than myself.

BEAUJOLOIS."

January 5, 1792.

At length I received my recall to France; but my joy was greatly troubled by my grief at quitting my friends who were quite in despair.—Madame Bocquet, Mademoiselle Itzig, Madame Cohen, M. Mayet, M. Gualtiery, * and M. Lombard. To avoid painful farewells, I quitted Berlin at four in the morning with Casimir; I put up the most sincere prayers for the happiness of my friends and for that of the hospitable country I

* Afterwards sent by his government into Portugal, where he died.—(*Note by the Author.*)

was leaving, whose king was so virtuous, and whose government was so mild and so equitable. The homage which I render him here is not of recent date; I rendered him honours of the same or a higher kind in the second volume of the *Souvenirs of Felicie,* in which I have given equal eulogies to Prussia and its monarch. I published this volume at the time when the Emperor Napoleon was residing at Berlin, which he had just conquered.

I am now about to re-enter my country after nine years of expatriation! I shall always preserve a kind remembrance of the places where I have lived, and the tenderest attachment for the persons who received me kindly during my long proscription. I shall never forget the pretty town of St. Edmundsbury; the convent of Bremgarten, the humble asylum of all the virtues; our little habitation on the borders of the lake of Zug, the woods and the waters of Oudenarden, the hospitable towns of Hamburg and Altona, the farm of Sielk, my dear cottage of Brevel, the châteaus of Dolrott, and Berlin. I have every where found friends; those whom I leave here (at Berlin) will always be dear to me. May they live always happy and peaceable in the bosom of their country! their fate will be always interesting to me. If it

changes . . . . I will partake their pains as they have partaken mine! . . . . I shall all my life interest myself in the prosperity of Berlin, of that brilliant and beautiful town so wisely governed, the ancient and modern refuge of unfortunate French fugitives!

I next went to Hamburg, where I stopped at the house of my niece, Madame Matthiessen. Here I received a visit from Klopstock. There are certain people with whom an interview is insupportable to authors. Such people wish, not to know *you*, but to show you at once, as soon as they see you, all they know, and all the talents they have. I shall always recollect my singular interview with the famous author of *the Messiah* in the early part of my residence in Hamburg; I was then boarding with the pastor Volters. Klopstock requested permission to see me, and came. I was alone with my niece, when there entered a little old man, lame and very ugly; I rose, approached him, and led him to an arm-chair; he sat down in silence with an air of reflection, thrust himself into the arm-chair, and assumed the appearance of a man who has fixed himself there for a long time. Then, with a loud and shrill voice, he addressed to me this singular question: "Which, Madam, in your opinion, is the best prose writer, Voltaire or Buffon?" . . . . This manner of entering

upon a thesis, not a conversation, petrified me; and Klopstock, who was much more anxious to let me know his opinion than to ascertain mine, did not insist much upon my answer. . . . . "As for me," replied he, "I pronounce for Voltaire, and I found my opinion on several reasons—the first . . . ." He then gave me a dozen *reasons*, which formed a very long discourse; afterwards he spoke to me of his residence in Dresden and in Denmark, of the honours which had been paid to him there, and of the translation which a French emigrant was making of the Messiah. Throughout the whole conversation, I did not utter more than six monosyllables. Klopstock, after passing three hours with me, retired, highly satisfied with my powers of *conversation*; for he said in the course of the evening to one of my friends that he thought me very amiable. Assuredly I was amiable at very little expense.

This reminds me of a trait of another kind, at least equally comic. A French lady, receiving for the first time the visit of a man of letters and a baron—a German, named M. de Rambor—she addresssed him even before he sat down, thus: "*Pray, baron, what do you think of the action of Julian the Apostate, who, on disembarking and quitting the Tigris, set his fleet on fire?*"

This singular trait was related to me by the

Prince of T——, and proves that pedantry among all nations takes the same forms, and is equally absurd.

I remained here some days, and then departed for France. My niece, Pamela, and several other persons conducted me as far as Harbourg, where we separated.. I found myself with great joy in the same inn at Harbourg, where, seven years before, proscribed and a fugitive, I had passed the night in which I wrote my *Epistle to the Asylum which I may have.* We continued our route gaily; M. de Lawoestine came on to meet me at Antwerp; I saw him again with the greatest pleasure; he had given me a real proof of his friendship some years before, when he perfomed a journey of two hundred leagues, to come and pass a fortnight with me at Holstein. There happened on that occasion a singular accident, which I shall relate here;—I was at Altona in my inn, when I heard where M. de Lawoestine was; I wrote to him, and he replied that he would quit every thing to come and see me; I received his reply at the very moment when I had just renounced my *incognito* and resumed my real name. While my lodging was preparing at Hamburg I remained a week longer at Altona, continuing to dine at the *table d'hôte* as during the time of my *incognito*. For two months previous, a young stranger, whom

nobody knew, and wearing an order equally unknown, came regularly to dine at our inn; his manners were very agreeable, he spoke French very well, and seemed to have some talent. He placed himself always by my side at table; and I had great pleasure in talking with him. When I had declared my name, he paid me a great many compliments, and as he had told me that he had resided at Cléves, where M. de Lawoestine was, I asked him if he was acquainted with him, he cried out with enthusiasm, that not only he knew him, but that he was his intimate friend, and he added, that having a lodging at Hamburg he hoped that M. de Lawoestine would reside with him when he came there to see me. Two days after this conversation, I received one evening a letter from the stranger, who said that he was at the height of his joy, that M. de Lawoestine had arrived; but that he did not write to me in consequence of being unable, through an accident, which, however, was by no means dangerous, to use his right hand, and that he was obliged through fatigue to retire to bed. He begged me however, to go immediately to see him, and said that in order to save me all difficulty and delay, he had sent me a coach; and in point of fact, a hired carriage was waiting for me at the door. This

letter seemed to me so extraordinary that I showed it to my hostess, Mademoiselle Plock, who was in my room; Mademoiselle Plock told me that the young man passed generally for an adventurer, and advised me not to go to this singular rendezvous. I dismissed the carriage, saying that I should not go to Hamburg. The next day the stranger did not come to dine, nor the following days; indeed he never returned. M. de Lawoestine had not arrived; and when he did, which was not till two months after, he said he had never seen or known such a person as the stranger. I imagined that this stranger wished by his falsehoods, to induce me to go to his house, there to make me sign some surrender of my works; one thing is certain, that this trick was meant to cover a plot of a very black nature.

I met with my daughter at Brussels; after nine years of absence, my joy at seeing her again was inexpressible; for the dangers she had run, and the cruel disquietudes she had caused me, had made the years of our mutual absence twice as long and twice as painful. I passed several days at Brussels, where I was kindly received by Monsieur and Madame de Pontécoulant at the Prefecture. Casimir, who walked before me, entered the saloon first; his mode of entrance was somewhat

singular; he had never seen a floor waxed and rubbed, because at Berlin (at least at that time) oaken floors were very rare. The apartments, though otherwise very elegant, were merely boarded, and sanded and washed every day, or covered with carpets. Casimir was quite overjoyed at the sight of the shining floor, which made him fancy it the ice on which people skait; accordingly he made a long slide upon it, and in his impetuous course knocked down two children, and fell almost into the lap of Madame de Pontécoulant, who was at the other end of the room; this mode of introduction met with the greatest success, for it excited the laughter of the whole company. I found also here my nephew Cæsar du Crest; our happiness on finding ourselves together made me pass two or three days in the most agreeable manner. I saw also at Brussels M. de Jouy, with whom I had been so intimate at Tournai, and to whose marriage, moreover, I had contributed my assistance; I showed him that I had constantly preserved in my book of Souvenirs, some verses full of kindness which he had composed for me and signed with his own hand.

I returned to Paris with my daughter; I shall not attempt to paint the emotions which I experienced in again passing the frontier, on entering

France, on hearing the people talk French, on approaching Paris, on seeing the towers of Notre Dame, and on passing the barriers.

Emotions of a very different nature awaited me at Paris, and rendered my sojourn there very painful during the first three months.

Every thing seemed new to me; I felt like a stranger, who stops at every step to look round him. I could scarcely recognise the streets, of which all the names were changed; I found *philosophers* substituted for *saints;* I had been prepared for that metamorphosis by reading the *National Almanack,* where I saw the saints replaced by the *sans-culottides,* by *onions, cabbages, dung, asses, hogs, hares,* &c. &c. The national antipathy which the chiefs of the republic had for all that was not ignoble, or at least vulgar, had led them to suppress the names of *hotêl* and *palace.* Accordingly I found the inscriptions half effaced which had formerly been placed on the fronts of these ancient edifices: *Maison ci-devant Bourbon, Maison ci-devant Conti, propriété Nationale,* &c. There was still visible on several walls the republican inscription—*Liberty, Fraternity, or Death!**

* I had seen before leaving France, in going from Clermont into Auvergne, all the rocks, from Châlons to Autun, inscribed

I saw passing hackney coaches, which I recognised for the confiscated carriages of my friends; and in walking along the quays, I saw on the stalls, books which bore on their bindings the coats of arms of many persons of my acquaintance; and in other shops I saw their portraits exhibited for public sale. I entered one day the shop of an auctioneer, who had at least a score of them; I recognised them all, and my eyes filled with tears when I thought that three-fourths of the unfortunate nobles, whom these pictures represented, had been guillotined, and that the rest, despoiled of every thing, and proscribed, were perhaps wandering in foreign lands!

On leaving this shop, I wandered, still alone, to walk upon the boulevard; in a few minutes a person, carrying some pretty little wicker baskets, passed close by me; I stopped him to choose half a dozen; but I had no money about me, and besides I could not have carried home the baskets; he asked me for my address, and as I was near the open door of a wine merchant, I stepped up to the counter, and requested the use of a pen, ink, and paper; I wrote my address quickly, which I read aloud to the basket-maker before

with the terrible words—" *Tremble, aristocrats! Liberty, or death,*" &c. &c.—*(Note by the Author.)*

giving it him; upon this, the young man of the shop cried out—"*Dear me! you are at home here!*" "How?" said I.—"To be sure; this is the house that was formerly the *Hotêl de Genlis!*" . . . In fact, this was the very house which my brother-in-law, the Marquis de Genlis, had occupied fifteen years previously. It was impossible for me to recognise it; all the ground floor was divided into several shops, and the front of the other part altogether changed. This little incident wrung my heart, and I hastened to leave a place which inspired me with such melancholy feelings.

I saw many *parvenus* who, born in the class of simple workmen, had acquired the most brilliant fortunes; some of these remembered their former condition, only to admire the height to which they had risen, as if it was at all wonderful that a plebeian should have obtained a high rank at a time when the nobles were despoiled or excluded! The rest, full of arrogance and conceit, mistook rudeness for dignity; the words, *respect, honour,* never entered into their modes of speech, even when they addressed old men or women; but substituting to the phrases which are in use among well educated people, the words *advantage* and *civility,* reckoning nicely their steps when they

conducted a stranger to the door, scarcely condescending to bow, and speaking always loud, they fancied they had got the true manners of nobility, and a tone of complete fashion.

I met with great pleasure the son of one of my old gamekeepers, now a captain, who had served with great honour in our armies; his grace and good air reminded me of the saying of Rochefoucault: *A common look is often preserved at court; but never in the army.*

I met with women who naturally hated all kinds of interesting or witty conversation, because they could take no share in it; tittle-tattle or scandal formed all their talk: they had produced a coolness among all their husbands' friends, by their insipidity, their dryness, and their aptness to take offence, the ordinary defect of women who want talent and education. The most of these persons, ridiculously vain, reckoned their reciprocal visits, and bid (as it were) for a curtsey; they were always on the *qui vive?* always uneasy with regard to the manner in which they were treated, without knowing positively how *they ought to be treated*: so that they were continually irritating themselves by imaginary failures in politeness, and ideal impertinences. They were perpetually complaining to their husbands, who at first paid no

attention to them, but who, by degrees, became accustomed to this kind of conversation, because it was impossible to hold any other with them. I no longer found any *bureaux d'esprit*, and though I never had held any such, I regretted them. It was thus that were formerly styled in derision, those houses where the company consisted principally of men of letters, of learned persons, and of famous artists, and where the conversation turned principally on the fine arts, literature, and the sciences ; and these were the assemblies which ignorant persons and fools tried always to turn into ridicule.* Yet these assemblies would be equally instructive and agreeable, if they were exempt from all pedantry, and then no kind of society could have presented equal claims to our regard. In order to this, it would have been sufficient for the mistress of the house to have been frank and amiable, for in that case you can easily give the society that meets at your house the manners which you yourself possess. After the Hôtel de

* There was doubtless some pedantry at the Hotel de Rambouillet, but in general these assemblies of clever persons necessarily excited the jealousy of fools, who never fail to generalize particular mockeries, where they fall upon persons of great merit. It would be curious to collect all the good things that have been said at the Hôtel de Rambouillet.

Rambouillet, the most famous *bureaux d'esprit* were, in the last century, those of Mesdames du Deffant, Geoffrin, d'Espinasse, and d'Houdetot. Among all these clever women, she who did the honours of her house the best, was Madame du Deffant.*

I found many other subjects of regret—for I found every thing changed, even the language. This change happens regularly in all revolutions of long continuance. I have already cited on this point the example of the English revolution, and the pains which Charles II. took to reform the language, which had become altogether disfigured under Cromwell.

But although many persons among us still employ very bad forms of speech, we speak now much better than on my first return to France. The following are some of the phrases which struck me as most singular, and I am of opinion that it may not be useless to quote them here, for the benefit of young people and foreigners. *Ce n'est pas l'embarras*—*se donner les tons*—and *des gens de même farine*, appear to me to be expressions equally

* At present, the *bureaux d'esprit* are entirely gone, and our Government ought specially to regret them. Universal peace would be quite established, if they were to replace the *bureaux of politics*.—(*Note by the Author.*)

nonsensical and vulgar; and I could not have conceived, without hearing them, that they could ever have passed into the modes of speech of well educated persons. The following phrases are in no less bad taste: *Cela est farce—un objet consequent—cela coûte gros,* or *le Pérou,* to signify a matter that cost much money. On the subject of the latter phrase, a charming answer of the prince of T . . . . . was quoted a great deal at one time. The reply proves as much presence of mind as the capability of that distinguished person to assume all tones when requisite. He had given a magnificent entertainment. A lady highly dressed, who was unknown to him, approached him, and said, "*Cela doit vous coûter gros.*" "*Oh!*" replied he, "*Ce n'est pas le Pérou.*" In order to converse well, nothing must be said too strongly, and, at the same time, all must be said that is necessary to the clearness of what is meant to be expressed. Ellipsis is always injurious to conversation, because the words to be understood always will throw into it something of obscurity or *equivoque;* for this reason, we are wrong when we say *la Capitale,* (the capital,) for Paris; *Champagne,* or *Bordeaux,* meaning the *wine* of Champagne or Bordeaux; or, *les Français,* instead of the French theatre. *Elle a de l'usage . . . .* of

what? we should say, *Elle à de l'usage du monde.* When any one says, *a louis d'or*, you speak wrongly in another sense. *Eduquer; il reste*, for *il demeure*, meaning he lives: *son équipage*, instead of *sa voiture*, (his carriage;) *venez manger ma soupe; un castor*, for *un chapeau*, (a hat;) *je vous fais excuse, il roule carosse; une bonne trotte*, for *une bonne course*, (a long journey;) *son dû*, for his salary; *le beau monde; un beau râtelier*, or *une superbe denture*, when you praise fine teeth, are modes of speaking exceedingly low; as are the vulgar expressions, *elle est puissante*, that is, *grosse*, (stout;) *un muscadin*, a coxcomb; and the verbs, *embêter, endêver*, &c.; *je suis mortifié*, for *je suis fâché*, (I am sorry.) *Mortifié* means *humiliated;* and it is extremely absurd to say that you are *humiliated* not to have found a person at home.

All this is not without its use; for foreigners learning our ordinary language in general only by talking it with domestics, often use very ridiculous expressions. Thus several English ladies of rank have often been heard to remark, that they were cold or hot, *comme tout*.

I was no less astonished to hear the words *votre demoiselle*, instead of *Mademoiselle votre fille; Madame* quite short, in speaking of a wife to the husband; *en usez-vous?* (do you use to-

bacco?) for, do you take tobacco? *j'y vais de suite,* for *j'y vais tout de suite; il a des ecus,* (he has crowns,) for, he is rich. *Il lui fait la cour,* to express, he is in love with her—a phrase which used to be more delicately expressed by, *Il est occupé d'elle.*

Here are several other modes of speech, which were considered very improper formerly, but which are now become quite common: *J'ai pris une glace,* (I have taken an ice.) You might very well say, *prendre des glaces,* but you ought to have said *J'ai pris une ou plusieurs tasses de glaces,* (I have taken one or more *glasses of ice,*) which is a much more accurate way of speaking. *Des manières engageantes,* (engaging manners,) was an absurd phrase, and was considered so with reason; it was too much to say of a man, and to say it of a woman was almost to calumniate her, or at all events, to give her a eulogy by no means desirable. Foreigners often say that they have *drank* coffee, tea, &c.; *boire,* (to drink,) is only applicable to liquors intended to drink, in order to quench thirst, such as water, wine, beer, cider, &c.; we should say, *prendre du café, du thé, du chocolat, &c.* (*take* coffee, tea, chocolate, &c.)

But what shocked me chiefly was, to hear women calling their cabinet, *a boudoir*—a strange

word which was formerly in use only among courtezans. I thought also, that in doing the honours of a house, you should not offer a dish in a vague manner, like many persons who seem not to know the names of what they ask you to partake of; saying only *voulez-vous du poisson,* or *de la volaille?* (will you take *fish* or *fowl?*) The milliners were called *modistes,* and a memorandum book an *album;* and in speaking of any one's dress, it was *sa mise, sa mise décente,* &c. The following are some revolutionary phrases, which displeased me no less—*aborder la question, en dernière analyse, traverser la vie.* You can only *traverse* a road by crossing it—for to walk along it, is to follow the path. You can only say of an infant which has died in its cradle, that it has *traversé la vie.*

Somebody had invented a marvellous phrase, which replied to every thing, and excused every thing. When any one took a foolish step, his friends said, *C'est qu'il étoit dans une fausse position;* and then nothing could be urged in the way of objection. Nevertheless, that phrase literally translated, signifies that *a person is in an embarrassing situation;* to which, in former times, we should have replied, that good conduct, courage, and ability ought to release the person from it. But

the words *une fausse position*, as has been said, justified every thing.

I ought to state, to the honour of the society of the present day, that we much seldomer hear the incorrect phrases which I have been quoting; and even of the common-place and fashionable phrases, which, before the revolution, infused so much monotony and insipidity into the tone of our conversation. In our former state of society, now extinct or broken up, we heard every where exclamations expressive of astonishment, desolation, horror, enchantment, or enthusiasim; every thing was *inconceivable, unheard-of, monstrous, horrible, charming, or celestial.* When a man met another after having shut his doors against him, he never failed to protest that he was *in despair* at not having been at home. People of more refined tastes contented themselves with saying that they were *afflicted.* After paying seven or eight visits, you entered your house with a feeling of remorse for having plunged into affliction and reduced to despair a dozen people, but then you were consoled on the other hand by having charmed and rendered happy a like number. At the present day these exaggerations are greatly out of use; our women especially are much colder, less affectionate, less *welcoming* in the manners; but are

they more sincere? . . . This is a question which I shall not take it upon me to answer.

Suppers were no longer in fashion—for our customs, as well as our language had changed;* the plays did not end till eleven, and this of itself produced a great change in society. After dinner every one seemed disposed either to pay visits or go to the play; all were absent in mind, and pre-occupied with other thoughts; looked at their watches; in short all this gave an air of constraint which was a complete check upon agreeable conversation. The supper terminated the day; there was no longer any thing to be done; there was no more apprehension of the bustle and the interruption caused by the visits which are always made after dinner; every one was disposed to enjoy his neighbour's company; and in place of counting the hours, they were forgotten; you talked with perfect freedom of mind, and consequently in an agreeable manner.

Formerly the suppers of Paris were renowned for their gaiety; all tried to amuse themselves, and talked without interruption even at table, because you were always placed beside persons of

* Several of the Anglo-revolutionary usages still exist; those, for example, which are afterwards quoted.

your own choice, and the most suitable to your own disposition . . . . Among the princes of the blood, the prince always selected *two persons,* always *women,* to sit by him; the princess did the same, likewise choosing two women, unless there were a prince belonging to a sovereign house, and on the throne; besides, it was thought that neither a princess nor any lady in society could properly invite a man to come and sit by them for an hour and a half; it was considered that unless the most elevated rank conferred the privilege, there was no case in the ordinary course of things in which a woman could make *advances* to a man. Politeness was in its perfection, and of course always agreeable; it never degenerated into cold ceremony, and all persons in society carefully avoided all that bore any resemblance to *etiquette,* or that could recall the idea of any inequalities in rank. It was thought that in your own circle you ought to distribute your attentions to those who merited them, whether by their reputation, their wit, their personal consequence, or their places and employments; but without ever wounding or disobliging others—a plan which was accomplished by attending *somewhat* more to the persons, not by solemnly giving them a preference which made those who did not obtain it feel as if they were

playing inferior parts. The great lord who invited to a splendid supper the wife of a farmer-general and the lady of a duke and peer, treated them both with equal attention and respect. The *financière,* once seated in the circle would not have yielded her place to the duchess; and if by chance she had offered it, the duchess could not, under the pain of being thought impertinent, have accepted it. When the company was about to sit down to table, the master of the house did not rush towards the *most considerable personage,* lead her from the bottom of the room, make her pass in triumph before all the other ladies, and place her with pomp at the head of the table by his side. The other gentlemen did not spring forward to *hand the ladies,* as I have seen and sometimes still see them do. This was a custom then unknown but in country towns. The women left the saloon first; those who were nearest the door passed first; they took occasion to pay one another little compliments by the way, but in few words, so as by no means to delay the rest of the company. All this took place without any confusion, but calmly; there was neither hurry nor slowness; the men came last. When the company reached the dining-room, each placed himself at table where he chose, and the master and mistress of

the house easily found means *without making a scene*, to induce the four most distinguished women in company to sit by them. Generally this arrangement, like most of the others, had been privately agreed on in the drawing-room. Such were the social and truly polite manners of those days! which honoured those whom it was right particularly to honour, without wounding the others; *but we have changed all that.** On my return to France, I found that not only (and this practice is still continued) the master of the house laid hold of the most *distinguished lady* in the room, whom he always placed by his side, but he required a second, and named another gentleman, the highest in rank, whom he made also to sit near her; and if that lady, so highly honoured, happened to be fonder of amusement than of glory, and that by bad luck (the thing is not altogether impossible) the master of the house, or the general, or the marshal of France, &c. was a very tiresome personage, the lady passed a dull evening. The other ladies were no less happy; for the imperious despot who had brought them together at his house, had named aloud the persons who were to sit near them. A gaiety proof against every

* Molière.

thing was absolutely necessary to all who wished to be at all cheerful at these entertainments.

Formerly the ladies after dinner or supper was over, rose and left the table in order to wash their mouths; the gentlemen, and even the princes of the blood, out of respect to them, did not allow themselves to do the same thing in their presence, but went into an antichamber for the purpose. Now-a-days this part of our toilette is performed at table in many of our houses, where Frenchmen, seated by the side of ladies, wash their hands, and spit into a vase. . . . . This spectacle would have been truly astonishing to their grandfathers and grandmothers: the custom comes from England. It is certain this usage is not French: but at least the habit is more excusable in England, as *there* the women always rise at the dessert, leaving the gentlemen at table.

Formerly in the best company the women were treated by the men with almost all the respectful manners prescribed towards princes of the blood; they spoke to them almost always in the third person; they never used the phrases *thou and thee* among themselves in their presence; and however intimate they might be with their husbands, brothers, &c. they would never in their presence

have mentioned them merely by their names. Then, persons of good breeding would never have thought of praising a woman's beauty to her face; for they supposed her to possess all the modesty of her sex—the most flattering compliment they could pay her. When they addressed ladies, it was always in a tone of voice much less elevated than that which they used in speaking to men. This shade of respect had a grace about it which it is impossible to describe. Let me add, that before the revolution, no man would have ventured at Paris to appear in the presence of a lady in boots. To be sure, except when in the country, it was very unusual in ladies to receive gentlemen except at dinner or in the evening.

All these things were out of use when I returned; each man might have said,

De soins plus importans mon âme est agitée,

On the other hand, the women being no longer treated with respect, had lost the reserve which ought always to characterize them; for example, they called young men in company simply by their Christian names; and from the habit of hearing *thou and thee* continually made use of in their presence, had fallen into the custom of calling each other *thou*

and thee before company—a thing never heard of in former times.*

I observed another amusing absurdity. I discovered, in spite of the affected abuse of the old régime, that several *parvenus* had made a serious study of the art of mimicking the great lords of the old court. Messieurs de Talleyrand, de Valence, de Narbonne, and de Vandreuil were eminently their models. It must be allowed that they were well chosen.

A thing which particularly displeased me, was the suppression of coverings for the feet in sofas. I saw the highest and most fashionable ladies of that period receive company in dress, and lying on a couch without a foot covering. Of course, the slightest movement discovered their feet and part of their legs. The want of decency, which always takes away a charm, especially from women, made their manner and appearance in my eyes quite disagreeable.

* This remark on the *thou and thee* reminds me of a very pleasant repartee of Madame de Bussy, wife of the governor of St. Domingo. Being alone with her husband (whom she did not love) M. de Bussy entreated her to call him *thou and thee*, which she had never before done. After a great many entreaties, she consented at last, and said to him, *Eh bien, va-t'-en !—(Note by the Author.)*

My visits in several houses, opened my eyes to the inexperience and the bad taste of those who new-furnished the *hôtels* and the deserted and ruined palaces. I remarked in their plan a thousand absurdities. The stuffs with which the walls were hung, were plaited instead of being plain; the possessors doubtless calculated, that in that way the *measure* would be much larger, and that consequently the appearance of the whole would be much more magnificent. In order to avoid the mean appearance which must have brought to remembrance the origin of certain persons, all the articles of furniture received the heaviest and massiest forms. As symmetry had in general been banished from our gardens, it was thought right to exclude it from our apartments also—accordingly all the draperies were put up as if by chance. This affected disorder gave all the saloons the most ridiculous appearance; and you might have fancied yourself in rooms which the upholsterers had not yet had time to arrange. Lastly, to show that the new ideas neither excluded *grace* nor *gallantry*, men and women hung the curtains of their beds with the attributes of love, and transformed their night tables into *altars*. You might have seen conspirators who had been bathed in blood, stretched in sleep upon sumptuous beds,

adorned with cameos, representing Venus and the Graces! and hanging over their heads, you might have seen, not the sword of Damocles, but a light shaft, or a wreath of roses! . . . . *

Even our carriages were not secure from this general spirit of innovation. Before the revolution there were no hired cabriolets,† and this was an excellent thing; for the establishment of them has occasioned a number of accidents. The sedan chairs have been suppressed—as have the *brouettes*, a kind of carriage very desirable for the class of persons who were unable to pay the fiacres. It is surprising that public litters for the sick, drawn by mules, for convalescents, for women with child, &c. &c. to whom the use of ordinary vehicles is forbidden, have never been invented. These litters would be used at Paris, in the neighbourhood, and for travelling.

The shape of the old carriages was much more agreeable than that of carriages as round as balls, which are in the worst taste. The shapes of the berlines and of the old calèches, as well as that of

* This only refers to 1800; since then (thanks to the charming designs and the talents of M. M. Fontaine and Percier,) our furniture is as elegant as can be desired.—(*Note by the Author.*)

† There were some at Naples long before the revolution.—(*Note by the Author.*)

the *vis a vis*, were admirably designed in their way, and of the greatest elegance.

Jacobinism had suppressed all kinds of compliments, by suppressing the decencies of life. They had begun to revive about the time of my return, and apparently as if to make up for lost time they were multiplied and lengthened. For example, in entering a drawing-room and on leaving one, each person thought himself obliged to go and pay a compliment on his arrival or departure to the mistress of the house. Formerly, instead of these noisy and triumphal entrances, people presented themselves modestly and without *éclat;* they did not go up intrepidly to attack (as it were) the mistress of the house: generally a simple curtesy formed all the ceremonial. When the company left the house, they did not go up to take a solemn leave; they took the opportunity of retiring when other persons were coming in, and endeavoured, in the little bustle which this caused, that their retreat should not be seen, in order to avoid the reciprocal inconvenience of compliments, and of being followed to the door. The spirit of all these customs was good; it would be well if we returned to them entirely.*

* As is now the case. What has just been read was written in 1800.—(*Note by the Author.*)

After passing some time at Paris, I paid a great many visits to the neighbourhood and among the châteaux; I even made some of these excursions simply as a traveller, and through pure curiosity, and I confess I thought in general that there was a great deal more popularity and *liberality* to be found in our old castles. I no longer met with the chapels which were formerly so excellent as examples to our peasants. I saw women only at the parish churches; the men never went near it; and the peasants to imitate them abstained also.

I was equally scandalized by the *fêtes* given to the common people; the master of the château opened his gardens, with *permission* to invite to them keepers of public houses, cooks, &c. of whom they bought the repasts which we formerly gave so generously, but which, when wisely distributed, checked the drunkenness, the quarrels, the scandalous scenes, and the frequent murders which otherwise resulted from them. Another thing which struck me as ridiculous, was the pride of the ladies of the château, who, on these occasions of rejoicing, refused to dance with the peasants. I recollected that formerly in their *bals châmpetres*, we always refused to dance with any one else, and desired that the gentlemen of our acquaintance, instead of inviting us, should choose peasants

MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL

only as their partners. All this is certainly not without exceptions; I saw then, both in the country and in the *châteaux*, the charity of all kinds, which I once admired, exercised in all its extent.

I had been more than a year unable to pass the Place Louis XV., then called the Place de la Revolution, and to look at the Palais Royal.* . . . I lived at first in the Rue Papillon, in the Chaussée d'Autin, in charming apartments, ready furnished, belonging to a young person, who hired them to me for six months. Madame de Montesson, my aunt, had showed no signs of life, as far as I was concerned, during the whole of my residence in a foreign country, though I had quitted Paris in a perfectly good understanding with her; for subsequent to the death of the old Duke of Orleans, she confessed that she had no reason to speak otherwise than handsomely of me. I found her in the highest favour, through her acquaintance with Madame Bonaparte, wife of the first consul, who had caused the whole of her fortune to be restored to her. However, I went to pay her a visit the day after my arrival; I found

* A singular thing, and which proves the power of the imagination is, that when the tops of the railings were gilt, the appearance of the edifice no longer made the same impression upon me. —(*Note by the Author.*)

several persons with her; she received me with a coldness which went the length of impertinence, and affected, before me, to make a grand parade of her credit at court; she spoke a great deal about Madame Bonaparte, and the breakfasts which she gave her. My visit was short, and during it I spoke but little; M. de Valence saw me to the door. I told him at parting, that I was much too old to allow myself to be thus used, and that I should never come back: he excused Madame de Montesson in a droll manner, by saying that she would be better another time; that she had been vexed by seeing that I had not got at all an old look; that it was a little *female weakness*, which I must pardon.

M. de Valence talked to me of my affairs. He said that I could understand nothing of them; requested that I would talk of them to nobody, and that he would undertake the charge of them. I replied, that I should ask nothing of my children, though I had the best rights well secured, seeing I could make a claim on the Sillery estate; but that I should claim my dower from the Marquis of Noailles, who by regular deeds had engaged to pay it; in default of which, (as, for example, if he had become insolvent,) I had, as I have stated, a claim upon the estate of Sillery, which

was still in my family, and that I only made the demand of my dower on M. de Noailles, to preserve the principal of it to my children; as for the interest, I was resolved to employ it in doing good public works.

I say *public*, for I was determined to keep no part of it for my private use. The following is a statement of the way in which matters were arranged.

By my marriage contract, the half of all the furniture, and of the wines in the cellar, belonged to me. After the Terror, my daughter received a considerable sum from the government, as a consideration for the pillage of Sillery, and of her father's house in Paris; but I never claimed any part of that sum, though the half of it belonged to me. There remained at Sillery much of the furniture, and the whole of the library, but I never demanded any share of it; in short, I abandoned, without restriction, whatever was *family property*. I carried my delicacy so far, as not to keep a very fine statue of marble, which represented me at full length, and which formed one of the ornaments of the tomb of the late Maréchale d'Estrée. This statue, for which I had given many sittings to M. Monot, sculptor to the Academy, and which formed a part, on my return to France, of the collection

of M. Lenoir, was restored to me, through the generous attention of my friend the Count Kosakoski, a Pole. I knew that this piece of sculpture had cost M. de Genlis four thousand francs, and I gave it to M. de Valence. It was not found after his death, and no one knows what he made of it, for many persons saw it in his house for several days. As to my dowry, M. de Noailles, who had got rid of it *with the nation*, for two thousand francs in assignats, refused point blank to enter into any negociation with me on the subject. This occasioned a suit, which should, properly, have been decided before a high tribunal; but M. de Noailles requested that the cause might be heard before a lower one, which I decline naming, but which was composed only of five persons; to this request I was so simple as to consent, contrary to the advice of my counsel, M. Fournel, an advocate equally able and honest. Out of the five judges, M. de Noailles had three who decided in his favour, who gave as the ground of their decision, that I had my recourse on the estate of Sillery. This I in fact had; but as I have said, I have constantly refused to profit by it, and I gave up my dowry entirely to my children.

In my conversation with M. de Valence, I added, that being in want of money at this moment, I

claimed the portion which resulted to me from the property of my grand-uncle Dessaleux, on the whole of which Madame de Montesson had seized, and of which one-third belonged to me; he left among other things, without country plate, and furniture, and ready money, the estate of Pannats, near Avallon; this estate was valued at five thousand francs a year, and there was a pretty chateau belonging to it. Madame de Montesson did not scruple to offer me the sum of ten thousand francs, once paid, for my share. I had nothing---I was in the greatest difficulties---and I was compelled to accept the offer. She made me sign an act, by which I agreed never to lay claim to any thing further. If I had even got this sum in ready money, I should have been enabled to free myself from all my difficulties, because I should have had time to compose a work, and sell it to advantage; but I had not had the precaution to put this clause in my bargain, and I never received these ten thousand francs but in small sums, and at various dates; yet I was obliged to purchase all that was necessary, to furnish my apartments---a little kitchen furniture, a provision of linen, and a small assortment of silver articles. In this difficulty, I thought of bringing out a new edition of my *Rival Mothers*, with an additional volume. I was advised to sell

it to Henrichs, the bookseller, who offered me four thousand francs for it, which I accepted. But I was foolish enough not to have a written agreement with him; the edition was sold off in a fortnight, and Henrichs refused to give me a farthing. Maradan then called on me, and offered me twelve hundred francs a year to write in the *Bibliothèque des Romans*, which had not at that time forty subscribers; to which I consented. I wrote in this my first tale, called *Le Malencontreux*, which succeeded so well that the number of subscribers was immediately quintupled. I afterwards gave *The Hermits of the Pontine Marshes*. I knew, as I have already stated, that the Duchess of Orleans was exceedingly anxious to return to France; I wrote this tale with the sole intention of exciting an interest in her favour, and of seconding the design she entertained of returning to her country. The permission she solicited was refused; but I had nevertheless the merit of a pure-spirited, and courageous action, which must have been highly displeasing to the government of that day. I afterwards wrote the most touching eulogy of her virtues in the *Souvenirs de Félicie*. I have never let slip any opportunity of praising her, and of doing homage to her character. The *Souvenirs of Félicie* awakened in my favour many old *recol-*

lections. A friend who, previous to that time, had preserved them all, (M. de Cabre,) sent me the following charming verses :

Seule, vous centuplez le temps,
Par tant de talens, de magie,
Qu'il vous doit bien quelque cent ans :
Lui seul le peut, *qu'il vous oublie.*
Non, vous ne vieillirez jamais,
Vous dont l'art donne à tout la vie,
Puisque moi-même je renais
Des souvenirs de Félicie.

After the *Malencontreux*, I published two novels, and *Mademoiselle de Clermont*, of which the success was so extraordinary, that Maradan, of his own accord, had the politeness to give me four thousand francs, instead of twelve hundred, for the *Bibliothèque des Romans.* In four months after, I bought furniture, and went to fix myself in the Rue d'Enfer. Amidst all these labours, and all my difficulties, Casimir was my greatest consolation; I amused myself with teaching him to play on the harp---an instrument on which he has since done wonders.

My successes, in the mean time, had the effect of awakening somewhat of kindness in Madame de Montesson towards me; she made me a sort of apology for her former reception of me, and I

returned to visit her. On this occasion, her behaviour to me formed a complete contrast to what it was on the last; she received me with exaggerated demonstrations of affection, which continued up to her death. She never, however, rendered me a single service, nor did I ever ask her a favour; and in her will she disinherited me.

In a few days after my establishment in the Rue d'Enfer, I received the following polite letter from M. de la Harpe, which greatly surprised me:

"Madam,

"It is, doubtless, somewhat singular to reply now at Paris, to a letter written from Holstein near four years ago. But we are now accustomed to singularities of every description, and this one belongs to the revolutionary genus. Here are the facts.

"The letter with which you honoured me, reached me at the moment of the crisis of *Fructidor*. Being obliged to fly, and to conceal myself, I regarded it as a necessary precaution, that my handwriting, which was known, should not be seen at the post-office, in any manner whatever. You are aware, that all letters, without exception, were opened there; mine would, assuredly, have been perfectly indifferent to the public. But you know

what the Directory was, and what its members were capable of, having possession of any letter of mine, whatever were its contents. I was pursued with fury already, and I did not wish to give other arms to my enemies.

"Besides, Madam, the sentiments which dictated your letter, which touched me to the bottom of my soul, might have satisfied you by anticipation of the nature of mine; on the one side and the other, they were the fruit of principles common to both; the public profession which I made of them, and shall always make, allowed me to bear no feelings of resentment against any one, more especially against you, Madam, to whom I owed the deepest gratitude, for the numerous kindnesses you honoured me with, during the too short period of our acquaintance. Founded, as this feeling happily was, on the love of letters alone, and the charm of your talents, it could never have occasioned to either of us any thing approaching to regret or repentance, and you yourself knew how to guard me against the seduction, which another kind of charm might have rendered dangerous to my peace. This is a piece of justice which is due to you; as to that due to your works, you will find it in its proper place, in the book I am now finishing.

"If mistrust, or the trifling niceties of self-love have contributed to put an end to a connection which to me will be always dear, you are now as capable as any one of appreciating these literary vanities. Your letter assures me of this, and as far as I am concerned, I can only beg you to add to your former kindness, that of excusing any wrongs I may have been guilty of towards you. For you, Madam, if you think I have ever offered you any, be assured the step which you have been pleased to take will efface them; it does honour to yourself, still more than to me, or rather it is a homage to him who is the Author of all Good.

"Accept, Madam, the respectful assurances of my gratitude.

LA HARPE."

"P. S.—The retired way in which I live, prevented me from knowing till within the last two days, your return to Paris, or your address."

A short time afterwards I received another letter, which contains a paragraph so curious, that I have preserved it.

Holiness suddenly and completely changes the disposition; a soul suddenly enlightened by the truths of religion, and giving itself to God without reserve, seizes with rapidity all the virtues and all

the perfections which often are the fruit of a long but indolent penitence, which though, nevertheless, sustained by sincere faith, exhibits neither ardour nor enthusiasm. Thus the simple fact of a conversion never destroys but in the long run; a ruling defect, and that of M. La Harpe was coxcombry. In the letter to which I have just alluded, after some phrases relative to our past quarrels, he adds: "That, nevertheless, throughout, he has rendered justice to my character, and that he had even justified me from several calumnies, *saying boldly that he had loved me, but that I had always resisted him!*" . . . .

I replied as well as I could to this singular letter. He called upon me. I congratulated him from the bottom of my soul on his conversion; and reminded him, that long before the revolution I had predicted it. He replied, that in reality his mind had been always struck with the proofs of religion, with its grandeur and its morality, and that he had only been seduced from *that single object of his existence by the attractions of pleasure.* These were his very words. He told me that he reserved one day in the week for *his friends;* and on that day they all came to visit him, merely *to talk.* He pressed me earnestly to go, and I made a vague promise that I would. But on

making inquiries on the subject, I learned that these assemblies, always consisting of twenty-five or thirty persons, formed at once a *bureau d'esprit* and a *mystical and political assembly;* so as I never had any taste for secret associations, except such as had for their object the relief of the poor, I determined not to go. M. de La Harpe wrote me two notes on the subject. The following was a phrase in the first: "*You ought really to belong to us.*" This expression *to us* confirmed my belief of what I had been told. I persisted in refusing to visit him. I excused myself on the ground of my occupations and my *sauvagerie*, which entirely cooled his ardour about me. He never returned to my house, and our reconciliation stopped here. Afterwards these meetings came to be regarded as seditious, and M. de La Harpe was exiled to the environs of Paris. As it is certain that the members of this society confined themselves to speaking freely of the government, without plotting against it, such severity towards M. de La Harpe was unjust and ill-judged; the talents and the age of M. de La Harpe merited not only particular attention, but all kinds of favours and literary distinctions. He received none under the imperial government, and yet they were lavished upon literary men who were in all respects inferior to

him. His health already weak at the time of his exile, soon became altogether broken : he felt his end approaching, and he saw death before him with all the firmness of a Christian. When he knew that he had but a few days to live, he asked for and received all the sacraments. At the same time he wrote to his friend M. de Fontanes, whom he wished to see before he died. M. de Fontanes immediately came to him, and found M. de La Harpe in full possession of his memory and his senses, and of sentiments of the most exalted piety. Two hours before his death, he caused the prayers for the dying to be repeated, making himself the responses in a touching yet firm tone. Thus died, banished to a village, the first man of letters of his time, and one of the best critics of his age. I derive all the details relative to his death from M. de Fontanes, by whom I heard them related a few days afterwards at the house of my aunt Madame de Montesson.

M. de La Harpe, as a poet, had a great deal of talent; there are many charming pieces in his fugitive poetry, and the versification of his dramatic works in general is fine. Nevertheless, he may justly be accused of occasional false taste and some nonsense. M. de Voltaire secured himself against these defects, and the bad taste which

had become general towards the middle of the reign of Louis XV. M. de La Harpe would always have been an excellent moralist, if false philosophy had not misdirected at an early age, both his principles and his understanding. He would have been always the first of critics if self-love and literary ambition had not prodigiously influenced all his opinions. His *Course of Literature* is in general an excellent work; but impartiality is wanting throughout. In order to maintain in it his early opinions, and especially the unbounded flattery which he had once lavished on Voltáire, he strives too much to conceal the defects in the dramatic pieces of that author, and more particularly the faults of all his plots. *Zaïre* is far too highly praised, and is preferred to all his plays; though, certainly, true critics will always prefer *Brutus*, *Alzire*, and *Mahomet* to *Zaïre*. He does not sufficiently praise Racine; he is unjust to Crébillon, and is shockingly so towards Du Belloy; in short, he excuses in general many faults, merely because they are to be found in his own writings. He may be also reproached with not being sufficiently read in the old poets; he had not at all studied that part of our literature. It is also to be lamented that he had so superficial an idea of foreign literature, especially of English, though

he has written separate dissertations on Shakspeare. He has spoken of him very ignorantly, because he judged him only by the mockeries of Voltaire, and by some translations; he did not know a word of English. This ignorance of modern languages was common to all the men of letters of the last century. In spite of all I have said, however, the *Course of Literature* of M. de La Harpe, is a work made to last, and must be always useful. There is throughout the work an admirable refutation of philosophical principles, and it developes a superior understanding and infinite wit. The time at which M. de La Harpe published this *course*, might of itself immortalize his memory. It was amidst triumphant impiety that he had the courage to proclaim, without regard to personal consequences, his beautiful and lofty lessons. He suffered many insults, he was pursued and persecuted, and he made himself many new enemies; but he braved all, and endured all, for the sake of maintaining the cause of religion and of truth. His conversion gave his character and his mind an energy, a warmth, and a zeal, which they had never before possessed; yet ten years afterwards his enemies did not scruple to say that he was only a hypocrite. The epoch of his conversion,

and the years that passed up to the time of his death, are a sufficient reply to this absurd accusation.

I resume my narrative.

I was scarcely fixed in the Rue d'Enfer, when Maradan the bookseller called on me to beg I would interest myself in behalf of a young man called M. Fiévée, author of two novels—the one entitled *Frederic*, the other *La Dot de Suzette*—who was in prison for his political opinions.* I immediately occupied myself with the task of obtaining his liberty, and I had the good fortune to succeed. While he was still in prison, he sent his young friend to thank me for the steps I was taking in his favour; the young man was clever and amiable; I felt great pleasure in conversing with him, and gave him a letter to M. Fiévée, to which the following answer was returned:

"MADAM,

"YOU require me to write to you. After the works which prove your talents, your information, and your principles; after the interest you have shown in my fate without knowing me, an interest

* This persecution should now be regarded as honourable to him, seeing it related to an alleged correspondence with Louis XVIII.—(*Note by the Author.*)

which at once honours me and proves your love of justice, there are still, I find, other qualities to be discovered in you! I should be reduced to guess at them, however, were it not for the visits of Théodore; but, after having seen him several times, do you imagine I could be ignorant of the charming goodnature which renders your society so agreeable, and that attention of remarking in others whatever is most to their advantage? He speaks of you so much and so well, that I am sure I know you far better than many who have had the pleasure of being often in your company.

"I sometimes smile at the idea of our first interview, perhaps only because it is impossible for me to figure to myself any idea of it.

"It would not be surprising to me if, from the very first we talked to each other like old acquaintances, who converse together without self-love, because their intimacy excludes it, and without scruple, because persons who can boast of some good qualities, are not angry to hear themselves reproached with some faults. This it is which gives its true value to praise! we shall succeed in forgetting that we have had wit for the public, and then it will be easy for us to omit all display of it between ourselves. I shall scold you for your friendship for Théodore, because it makes

him too vain: you will readily find reasons for scolding me in your turn, and I assure you he will be delighted to see his Mentor at last under the yoke. Upon the whole, I am convinced that you and he will always make two against me.

"Farewell, Madam; you will perceive that after having begun by moralizing, I end by talking nonsense; is not this too often the custom?"

He came afterwards to pay me a visit of thanks, and we formed together an intimate friendship, which lasted till the restoration. At that period, M. Fiévée without quarrelling, without any discussion, or any bad behaviour on his part, ceased altogether to see or to write to me. I regretted this, because I had a sincere friendship for him, and duly appreciated his understanding and his talents. I have a right in this instance to complain of his injustice in point of friendship, though I have none to accuse him of ingratitude. I rendered him one service, which he returned, by rendering me another highly important one, which I did not require at his hands, and which might have exposed him to risk, as will be seen hereafter in these memoirs.

I remained only nine months in the Rue d'Enfer. Finding it too expensive for me to live at

Paris, I went to fix myself at Versailles, where I hired a small house in the *Avenue de Paris*.* I had increased my family by two persons; the one, my god-daughter, fourteen years of age, the daughter of M. Alyon, who was one of the persons employed in the education of the princes at Belle-Chasse; the other, a young German girl of seventeen, very pretty and clever, who drew very agreeably, and composed in her own tongue verses which announced the highest talent. There was poetry in her blood; her grandmother, whose name was Karschin, had possessed a very high reputation in this way. Her history is singular, and was as follows:—

She kept sheep in Silesia, and nature had formed her so completely a poet, that when spinning in her cottage or in the fields she composed beautiful verses; she composed an ode in praise of Frederick the Great, who was then alive; a traveller brought this piece of verse from Silesia

* I had been thirteen months in France, and besides the works of which I have spoken, I had published an additional volume of the *Annales de la Vertu*, which had been almost entirely written in Germany, as well as my new *Method of Teaching*. I also wrote my *Hours* for children, a work much wanted, and which has gone through an infinite number of editions: and lastly, I published my new edition of the *Little La Bruyère*, to the end of which I added several new thoughts.—(*Note by the Author.*)

to Berlin, and it produced a great sensation: the king wished to know the name of the author, and being unable to persuade himself that a shepherdess had such talents, he sent for her out of Silesia—she was presented to the king, in her peasant's dress; his majesty was delighted with her talents; she composed pretty verses in his presence on subjects with which he furnished her; the prince gave her a pension; she fixed herself at Berlin, and was married there. Her grand-daughter Helmina inherited all her talent for poetry.

I was very unwell at Versailles, yet I continued to work: my situation obliged me to do so, and as I never would allow this to any one, my friends were perpetually remonstrating with me on my *unreasonableness:* this inspired me one day with the following lines, which I have never either published or shown, but which I find in an old manuscript book. Here they are:—

Et malade et souffrant, un malheureux auteur,
Languissament assis à son pupitre,
En gémissant composoit une épître
Sur la gaietè, sur le bonheur.
Dans ce moment arrive son docteur,
Qui mécontent de le voir à l'ouvrage,
L'exhorte à devenir plus sage
Si de ses maux il veut guérir.

"Hélas! répond l'auteur, en poussant un soupir,
Ce conseil est trés-bon, que ne puis-je le suivre !
Jè ne travaille pas, ami, pour mon plaisir ;
Croyez-moi, ce n'est pas la gloire qui m'enivre ;
Qui mieux que moi sauroit jouir
Des charmes d'un heureux loisir! . . . .
Mais je suis obligé de me tuer pour vivre."

A grievous vexation which occurred to me at Versailles, rendered my abode there very disagreeable to me; my nephew and pupil Cæsar, after having displayed so much valour and even rashness in the war, after having often had his clothes pierced through with balls, without having been once wounded—was killed in a national fête with the wooden part of some artificial fireworks. Thus perished, at the age of twenty-eight, a young man of the best disposition, the highest accomplishments, virtues, wit, and talents; and whose excellent conduct and prudence have never varied. I have rarely seen so much gaiety and so many agreeable accomplishments united to so much steadiness. I was seriously ill for two months; and having determined on returning to Paris, I petitioned the government for a house: I was offered that of Mademoiselle Arnoult, formerly an actress of the opera, who was dying, and had not two months to live: she lodged at the Hotel d'An-

gevillers. This name was that of an emigrant,* a relation of M. de Genlis; he had occupied that hotel in quality of a superintendant of the arts. The house belonged to the government, but as it bore the name of Angevillers, I was afraid it might be regarded as family property, and that I might have been thought to have profited by a confiscation: this was carrying delicacy too far, but I thought I was only doing what was right in refusing the lodging; I got one at the Arsenal; it was very handsome, and contiguous to the library. The minister, M. Chaptal, gave orders that they should lend me all the books I asked for, which was done.

During the two first years of my residence at the Arsenal, I continued to write in the *Bibliothéque des Romans;* afterwards wishing to finish without disturbance the romance of the *Duchess of La Vallière,* which I had begun, and which indeed was considerably advanced, I ceased writing in the *Bibliothéque des Romans,* which then lost its subscribers. A short time before the publication of *Madame de la Vallière,* M. Fiévée, who was in correspondence with the first consul, knowing that neither myself nor any person of my family had ever tried to recommend me to the

* Brother of M. de Flahaut.

head of the government, told me he was determined to write that I had recovered none of my property on my return to France, and that I lived entirely by my works; I thanked M. Fiévée, but entreated him not to take a step which would certainly compromise him, as the first consul only allowed him to write on political matters: M. Fiévée however generously persisted, and the consequence of his letter was, that the first consul sent M. de Remusat, prefect of the palace, to me, to inform me that the first consul had now, for the first time, heard of my situation; *that if he had known it on my first arrival in France, it should have been immediately improved; and that he requested me to demand whatever was wanting to make me happy.* As my first emotions are always romantic, I replied that I could live very well by my labours, and that I should never solicit any thing.

It was at the Arsenal, as I have stated, that I wrote the romance of *Madame de La Vallière:* I wanted money and sold for a hundred louis for three years, that work, which in the space of two years, went through eight editions in 8vo. and ten in 12mo. This romance put the age of Louis XIV. extremely in fashion.

Even the newspapers treated my work well;

Madame de Vallière was the favourite subject of conversation in society: I never met any one in company, who did not pronounce that name with the epithets *charming* or *ravishing* attached to it. This went to such lengths that I became at last quite annoyed at it, and I listened to all such compliments in fits of absence, as I proved one night at the house of Madame de Lacours. There was a large party, and I was sitting alone on a sofa, when a lady, as clever as she is amiable, (Madame de Remusat,) came and sat down by me, and, as usual, began to converse about Madame de La Vallière. As in the course of the evening I had heard the compliment repeated upwards of thirty times, I fell into a complete fit of absence, and replied unconsciously, "*Oh yes, it is charming, ravishing.*" The surprise which showed itself in the face of Madame de Remusat, at once discovered to me the blunder I had made; I accordingly repaired my mistake, by frankly relating to her the fact, which she thought droll enough. She laughed heartily, and related the anecdote to every body for several days. But I was not equally indifferent to the suffrage of a certain distinguished person; it caused me a delight approaching to enthusiasm; one of my friends, Madame de Bon, wrote me the following note:—

"I must tell you, my dear, that the first consul read *Madame de La Vallière* the day before yesterday, that he read it through without once stopping, and that he was affected by it to tears. This is a positive fact; I was informed of it by M. de Fontanes, who was told so by the consul himself. Marigné says, that I send you the consul's tears, which are better than verses; the truth is, that the circumstance has infinitely delighted me. Farewell, you, whom I adore, and for whom I would sacrifice my life.

"Elizabeth."

This note delighted me; I was proud of making the man weep who had just restored religion, order, and peace, who had saved my country from anarchy, and who was the greatest captain of the age. In the first moments of my enchantment at my success, I wrote an impromptu in verse, which I sent immediately to Madame de Bon. She gave the verses to M. de Fontanes, who, without delay, transmitted them to the first consul. I regret that I did not preserve a copy of them, for there was in them a certain *inspiration* which truth and feeling are always sure to give.

Madame de Brosseron, after reading the same work, made me a present of a charming original

portrait of Madame de la Vallière in her youth; and subsequently, Mr. Craufurd took from his fine collection of portraits, that of Madame de Maintenon, a full length picture, in which she was painted as large as life, and seated. At the time of the restoration, I sold this picture to the late Duchess Dowager of Orleans. It is now in the superb gallery of his Royal Highness the Duke of Orleans.

I received on the same occasion, from an excellent literary critic, (M. Fiévée,) the letter which I here quote:

"I did not give any note to the person who brought me *Madame de la Vallière,* because I wished to send you something more than thanks: I have read to page one hundred and nine, and I must write to you before going to bed.

"Your preface is good; your work better than any thing you have yet done—better than any thing I have ever read; and you know that I do not often pay compliments. At page one hundred and nine, where I am forced to stop, I can only say to you, in the words of Father Anselm, *Persevere.* What truth in all the details! what grace and what depth in the reflections!—and the portraits! You will be able to explain to me why

their truth makes me smile with a smile which is not allied to gaiety; it seems to me, that it springs from the pleasure I feel in being able to discover all the movements of the human heart. Since I have known you, this is the first work of yours I have read without thinking of you; it seems to me that you are no more, for I think you must have been an eye-witness of what you are describing."

I obtained another suffrage, which procured me a charming letter from the Count de Ségur,* (the

* Nothing can more clearly paint the Count de Ségur, than the portrait which that illustrious person has drawn of himself, in the first volume of his memoirs. It is as follows:

"My situation, my birth, my connexions, both by friendship and relationship, with all the most eminent persons in the court of Louis XV. and Louis XVI.; the ministry headed, by my father, my travels in America, my negociations in Russia and Prussia, the advantage of having known, both in public and private, Catherine II., Frederic the Great, Potemkin, Joseph II., Gustavus III., Washington, Kosciusko, La Fayette, Nassau, Mirabeau, and Napoleon, as well as the chiefs, both of the aristocratic and democratic parties, and the most illustrious writers of my time; all which I have seen, performed, experienced, and suffered during the revolution—my strange alternations of happiness and misery, of credit and disgrace, of favour and proscription, of wealth and poverty—all the various occupations which my fate has compelled me to engage in—persuade me, that a sketch of my life may turn

elder,) which contains a very judicious criticism on a very bad description of romances, which, for some time past seemed to be getting into fashion.

"Madam,

"Madame de Valence has sent me the copy of *Madame de la Vallière*, which you had the goodness to direct to me. Receive, I entreat you, my best thanks for so amiable a mark of your remembrance. You render me but justice, if you think that I feel all the value of the purity of taste and style, which you, perhaps, alone preserve in the present day, and which renders your works worthy of the best days of our literature. *Madame de la Vallière* is, in my opinion, the work of which you have most reason to be proud; you have perfectly new-made a subject familiar to every body,

out piquant and interesting, since chance has decreed that I should successively have performed the parts of colonel, general, traveller, navigator, courtier, son of a minister, ambassador, negociator, prisoner, agriculturalist, soldier, elector, poet, dramatic author, newspaper editor, publicist, historian, deputy, counsellor of state, senator, academician, and peer of France.

"I have, of course, seen men and things, under all their aspects; sometimes, through the prism of good luck, at others, through the crape of misfortune—and my views have been leisurely taken, by the light of the torch of mild philosophy."

and you have thrown over it all the interest of a romance, without altering the authenticity of history; the simplicity of the subject is a rock on which you have not split; all that is an event to a passionate heart, has stood to you in place of the adventures, combats, and catastrophes, which are the sole resource of the greater part of romance-writers. You have the art of creating situations so touching and so varied, that you have succeeded in painting simplicity and constancy, without monotony, and without languor. The triumph of piety, after so long a combat between love and remorse, renders this romance highly moral, and innocence itself may peruse it, without any danger to the charm which the reading of it bestows. I beg you, Madam, to receive the assurance of my gratitude and my respect.

"SEGUR."

Some months after, I published *Madame de Maintenon;* this completed the general admiration for that brilliant age, and produced me the following letter from M. de Fontanes, whom I scarcely knew:

Madam,

I was equally surprised and flattered by your

doing me the honour to send me a copy of the last of your works. I never had the pleasure of knowing you, but through the pleasure the reading of them gave me. It has been said, that Fenelon was the first writer who had the art of rendering virtue amiable. In my opinion, *you* share that glory with him. Fenelon had his enemies, and, of course, you must have yours. The injustice of which you seem to complain in your writings belongs to every age. I doubt, even in an age more worthy of you, whether the Mesdames de Sevigné and La Fayette would have pardoned you for surpassing them. It is true, that the La Rochefoucaults, the La Fontaines, and the La Bruyères, would have been at your feet---but where are they at this day?

"Accept, Madam, my thanks and my respect.

"FONTANES."

The engravings illustrative of these works were to be found in all the shops; the government at last began to feel some umbrage at this kind of enthusiasm, and an order from the police, severely executed, forbade all the dealers to expose or sell plates from these two romances. I wrote at this time, the *Penitent Life of Madame de la Vallière*. The severity of the government, with regard to

these works, astonished me the more, as the emperor had greatly praised them, and even my novel, entitled *A Trait in the Life of Henry IV.*, which was made into a vaudeville, under another name. M. Dupaty wrote a pretty comic opera from *Mademoiselle de Clermont*, under the name of *Mademoiselle de Guise.* When this piece was printed, it was dedicated to me by the author; the dedication in verse is charming, and in the best taste. There have also been brought on the stage most of my novels; among others, *Ida, or the Green Petticoat; Family Meetings;* and *A Woman's Prejudices,* in which my song has been inserted; the *Lovers without Love;* and the *Husband turned Tutor*. It was the latter novel, which a man of letters, justly celebrated, (M. Etienne,) brought on the stage, under the title of *La Jeune Femme Colère.* A work thus metamorphosed, when it succeeds, discovers all the talent which is to be found in a good translation; so many things must be altered in a borrowed subject, that the author, who has chosen it, rightly appropriates to himself all the merit, and moreover adds new traits from his own imagination. There are also borrowed from my novels and romances, *Arthur and Sophonia; Clara,* from the *Siege of Rochelle; Belisaire,* from my piece of the same name; the

Knights of the Lion, from my *Knights of the Swan;* and *Camilla in the Cavern*, from *Adèle et Théodore*. Even of my comedies, two have been travestied; one, *La Cloison*, of which has been made *Aucassin et Nicolette;* the other, *La Curieuse*, from which M. Duval has so ingeniously framed his interesting drama, *Edward in Scotland*.* Many other things have been borrowed from my works, without counting plagiarisms. I have never noticed any of them, but that of Madame Cottin, whose novel, called *Malvina*, is altogether founded upon my *Vœux Téméraires*. I passed over the plagiarisms of Madame Gay, who made a romance out of two of my tales; the one of which is to be found in the *Souvenirs of Félicie*, of which the hero is a mute; the other called *The Rencontres*. If I were disposed to reclaim all that has been stolen from me, I should have to add another volume to these memoirs.

Some time afterwards, M. de Lavalette wrote to me, that the first consul, now emperor, desired I would write to him once a fortnight, *on politics, finances, literature, and morals, as well as on any*

* The King of Sweden, (who was assasinated, and who did such benevolent things to the blind man of Spa,) did me the honour of translating my play, *La Curieuse*, into Swedish.—(*Note by the Author.*)

other subjects that might occur to me. I never wrote to him either on politics or finance; I never requested any favour for myself, though I have asked many for others; he granted almost all my requests, without ever writing me a single line. I never said a word against my enemies; often I have spoken in their favour; I wrote to him nearly every month, but my subjects were only religion, and morals, literature, and the philosophers of the last century;* it was not my fault if he did not become religious. I know, through M. de Talleyrand and others, that he highly esteemed my letters, in which he found sense, frankness, and sometimes gaiety. This kind of correspondence made me a prodigious number of new enemies, some through envy, and others, because they were persuaded that I only amused the emperor by speaking ill of all other persons; this calumny touched me deeply. I replied to it by a note, which I inserted in *Madame de Maintenon,* and which formed a complete answer to such a base accusation. I said in that note, in reference to the pure

* There was a species of courage in writing to him against the philosophers, for every body knew, and I did not forget, that the emperor, while first consul, had paid a visit to Madame Helvetius, saying, that he wished to see the widow of a great man. —*(Note by the Author.)*

correspondence of Fenelon, found among the papers of the Duke of Burgundy after his death, that a person must have the blackest of hearts to speak against any one in a correspondence of this kind, when it is secret, and when it is addressed to a person of such rank. I added, that *it proved a want of respect to the prince who was addressed, not to dread his contempt and indignation against the professor of sentiments so base*. The following is the note at length:

"We have witnessed the publication of the correspondence of a man of letters with a foreign prince, but in a very different vein: I allude to that of M. de La Harpe, with the Grand Duke of Russia. There is none of the talent of M. de La Harpe to be found in that frivolous production; but what renders it most odious is the impiety and wickedness with which it abounds. We are wanting in respect to a prince when we correspond with him about our enmities and our literary quarrels; for, independent of all principle, if we esteemed the character of the prince, we should be disposed to display some delicacy and generosity, and should conceal our meanness and our vanity. I even go the length of thinking, that in a commerce of the kind, a man of letters ought to refrain from rendering a critical account of the writings of his enemies.

The correspondence of M. de la Harpe consists entirely of a false or exaggerated detail of his successes, of satires, consequently, of falsehoods, and anecdotes of scandal: what opinion, then, must he have had of the Grand Duke of Russia?"

The above note justified me completely; the calumniators were reduced to silence, but the enemies remained.

I never kept any copy of my correspondence with the emperor, but I have preserved some notes of a moral and religious kind, which formed a part of my letters. Here are some of these fragments:

"SIRE,

"As I wish my conduct in all respects to be open to the eyes of your Majesty, I think it right to submit to you the following statement:

"I have received for the first time, since the last fifteen years, a letter from Madame de Bourbon, dated from Barcelona. She states, that she has written a great deal about religion, ... that she does not wish to publish her manuscripts, but she is desirous that I should see them, and correct the style, if I should approve of the substance of the thoughts. I did not think it right to refuse

the request of Madame de Bourbon, in her present situation. I have always been partial to that clever princess, who has a great deal of originality in her character, and many attaching qualities--- among others, the most perfect sincerity ; besides, I should be delighted to succeed in turning her thoughts from writing. I have replied, that I was highly honoured by her confidence ; and that since she esteemed me qualified, I should read her manuscripts, in order to give her my frank opinion about them. Her letter reached me by a person unknown, of whose name and address I am ignorant, and whom I did not see, as he came to call on me at the Arsenal, where he gave the letter to a woman, whom I left in charge of my furniture. He has not returned since.

"It is now twelve or fifteen days since this occurred ; I gave my answer to one of my friends, who forwarded it by the post, under cover, to a merchant residing at Barcelona. Since my return to France, I have not had the least correspondence with any persons resident in foreign countries, who might, by their situation or their opinions, be discontented with the government.

"Even in foreign lands, while despoiled and proscribed, I conducted myself in the same manner. Before returning to France, I had ceased to

write to the Duke of Orleans from the month of April, 1794; I have had no correspondence with his royal brothers since 1792. Mademoiselle d'Orleans must always be the dearest to me of all my pupils; she feels towards me the deepest gratitude, and the liveliest friendship; she constantly wrote to me as long as I was in a foreign country, but she has entirely ceased to do so, since I have resided in France. I know this has been entirely through discretion, for I have, from time to time, heard of her indirectly. However, after a five years' silence, she wrote me, three months ago, a long letter, only, however, expressive of her tenderness; to this I replied, and here our correspondence stopped. I have preserved that letter, as well as Madame de Bourbon's. These are all my relations with that unfortunate family, for which I once disinterestedly sacrificed myself, without any other motive than that of the tenderest attachment, which has never been adequately recompensed, but by the angelic disposition, the charming talents, the perfect good sense, and the sentiments of Mademoiselle d'Orleans and her brothers.

"In England, I have seen nothing but a political attachment to religion; and the multiplicity of sects there produces, moreover, a scepticism almost universal; but the Catholics in that country

as they make great sacrifices for their religion, are attached to it with all their hearts. I have noticed the same thing in Holland, and have had occasion to remark it still more strongly in Germany. There it was that I had occasion to acquire another proof of the profoundness of the views of Bossuet, who predicted in his *Variations*, that all the Protestants would end in becoming *Socinians*, as it is in the nature of error, when persisted in, to go astray constantly more and more. All the Protestant pastors are in general deists. They scarcely ever pronounce in their sermons the name of Jesus Christ. Nothing is more ridiculously profane than their discourses from the pulpit. At Berlin, I heard the pastor of the French Protestant church, a preacher highly renowned in that town, (M. Ancillon,) speak of nothing in the pulpit but of *sensibility*, of friendship, of that *divine sentiment;* and in a pastoral exhortation, on occasion of a marriage, he said, in speaking of women, *that enchanting sex*. This discourse, equally insipid and absurd, was printed; I brought a copy of it with me. This misplaced tone, which is in such bad taste, sufficiently proves astonishing degeneracy in the religious notions, both among priests and auditors. The people in these countries are not attached to their religion; they allow their

children to be brought up in the Catholic religion. I can cite two examples among my own pupils— Lady Edward Fitzgerald, and the child I brought with me from Berlin."

The following was written to the emperor on the subject of old age.

"In my youth, I always promised in my own mind that I should study that age in myself if ever I became old: I am now old, and I keep my word. I formerly viewed with horror the prospect of such a state, which is to be sure sufficiently terrible in perspective to a woman when she is gay, animated, brilliant, and surrounded with admirers. . . . . . An aged monarch, whose reign has been marked by goodness and glory, presents a divine view of old age: we are tempted to offer him our adoration. An old warrior, or an aged magistrate, who have done their duty, inspire us with profound veneration. But, an old woman! . . . . the very name is cruel! . . . . I have met with very few old women after my own taste, even among those who are reckoned amiable. Some had an air of affected mildness, and a honeyed tone which looked like hypocrisy: others displayed a gaiety which was either unnatural, or which took away

from them all the dignity of their age. Some affected tiresome gravity; others talked and told stories too much: besides, what effect does an old woman produce in a party? First of all, she disfigures it; and next, is it not ridiculous that the art of the embroiderer, of the jeweller, and the milliner, should be thrown away on the embellishment of a face sixty years old? Shakspeare says, that a great charge which has once been in the hands of a man of genius, and which afterwards devolves upon a fool, is like *the habit of a giant worn by a dwarf*. What would he say of an elegant head-dress made by Leroi, to be put on the head of an old woman? Yet, we see this daily; we even see these queens, who have been long dethroned, wearing diadems of diamonds and flowers. It has always seemed to me so difficult, not to say impossible, for an old woman to be pleasing in public, that there is something of mockery in her appearance there, unless she is constrained to be in society by a positive duty. But if she is frank and good-humoured, if she is well acquainted with society, her intimate acquaintance may be agreeable, provided always, that she has not a fury for relating anecdotes, and never tells stories but in their right places.

"Cicero is the author who has said the best

things on old men: he says that they are like wines, which time either improves or turns sour.

"There exist some human creatures who have not been vicious, and who in the course of their lives have been thought neither weak nor foolish, who nevertheless, when they get to the age of seventy, think seriously that they were created for no other purposes but to dress, breakfast, dine, sup, play at piquet and sleep.

"Whoever is capable of reflecting, must be very unhappy in old age, when, in throwing a glance on the past, he sees only a long series of years passed in unthinking idleness: and when in the space of more than half a century, he finds not the useful and active life of an intelligent being, but the shameful vegetation of a brute.

"When an old man is exempt from infirmities, preserves his intellectual faculties, and is religious, he is in a state of habitual happiness, which, in his youth, he could never have known. He is naturally freed from all social obligations; and this fortunate freedom of course, doubles to him the years which remain. He will not regret pleasures which do not belong to his age: if he has a good understanding, he will have been fatigued and satiated with them long before he has been obliged to renounce them. The future which lies before

him is short, but he is completely the master of it, and he can dispose of his time without dreading that his resolutions may be crossed or overthrown by his passions, his impulses, or his imprudence. He knows the true value of things; he no longer frets himself about trifles; he is calm, and judges accurately: and this is the whole secret of a wise man's behaviour. If his presence no longer excites turbulent joy or gaiety, it inspires respect and veneration. Well educated young people do not dispute with him the deference which is due to his age: for, when you honour an old man, to whose age you may one day attain, you honour yourself in prospective; and nothing is more attaching than the conversation of an old man who does not abuse the privilege of being listened to with interest and attention. In short, the physical weakness and even the debility of age, has its compensations. That light sense of weariness, which gives its habitual heaviness without the feeling of suffering, renders the slumbers and the rest of old age so sweet! Sitting down in a comfortable arm-chair, especially on returning from a walk—tasting the charms of a perfect calm, or sometimes amidst an agreeable reverie, yielding for a few moments to sleep—these are the true pleasures of age, and these are daily renewed.

"It is inconceivable how an old man can give himself up to ill-humour, anger, avarice or ambition, and thereby render himself intolerable to all that surround him. About to quit every thing as he is, to what purpose are all the honours he is soliciting, the wealth he is amassing, or all the superfluities of luxury which he is accumulating about him? He has no longer time for any thing but *giving* and *forgiving*. What man is there who, when he is preparing to expatriate himself for ever, should think of employing the moments which are to pass before his departure in scolding, in ill-humour, in ill-treating his relatives and friends, from whom he is about to separate himself never to return to them? There is not a single person who in such a situation, does not desire to leave behind him regrets for his departure, and who does not endeavour to deserve to be regretted. Ah! the true wisdom in old age consists in mildness, in never failing indulgence, and in good-nature. Can these qualities which religion prescribes to all ages, be a hard task upon the old? They in nowise exclude vigour of understanding or force of mind: they may be perfectly allied with the courage which leads us fearlessly to condemn bad actions, public impiety, and corrupt principles: but an old man, who is what he ought to be,

speaks in favour of morality, without bitterness and without exaggeration. He is inaccessible to hatred, and all his endeavours are directed to making happy those who surround him; he asks nothing of them; he offers them the counsels of his wisdom and of his experience; and he is to his family and friends a watchful sentinel, placed on his post for a short time."*

The stories which circulated daily respecting the court, appeared to me so pitiful, that I produced the following fragment, addressed to the emperor:—

"It is not astonishing that, after such a commencement of our campaigns and such victories, we should be full of confidence: but it is also true that even before such brilliant successes, no one doubted of the triumph of armies commanded by such a chief. At the present day the enthusiasm is general—every one is proud of being a Frenchman: but commerce does not prosper, our merchants sell nothing, and the jewellers,

* Some persons have been pleased to cite with praise the chapter on Old Age, which I have inserted in my *Employment of Time.* I ought here to mention, that in that chapter I have regarded age under another point of view.—(*Note by the Author.*)

dealers in stuffs, embroideries, fashions, &c. &c. are particularly loud in their complaints. It is to be wished that the princes and all persons in place, should give grand dinners, concerts, &c. and should have assemblies at their houses on fixed days. This would of itself give a good appearance to Paris, would occasion the sale of stuffs, and furnish work for the artizans. All the fortunes of the present day are benefits conferred by the emperor, and those who enjoy them ought to show a disposition to concur in the views of the government; some display would, undoubtedly, at the present moment be exceedingly useful; and if princes and ministers set the example, it would be easy to engage senators and other rich persons to follow it, by means of articles inserted in the newspapers, in which such conduct should be adroitly praised, without exaggeration of any kind. It must be recollected, that the suffrage of our wealthy merchants, our great manufacturers, and even our distinguished artists, has much more influence now than formerly, because society is at present made up from all classes; their murmurs were formerly confined to their counters, but now they are echoed in our drawingrooms. I was a few days since in a house where, in general, one meets with brilliant company; there were ten or twelve

persons present, and among others, a person unknown to me, who complained greatly of the existing misery, and said, that all the houses were actually shut up; he predicted with bitterness that the winter would be a *disastrous* one, because there would be no *fêtes*—no grand dinners; and he added, in so plaintive a tone, that there would not be *a single lustre lighted* in private houses, that I said to my neighbour, "I'll wager this man sells wax candles:" and in fact it turned out that he was interested in a manufactory of that article. This man and a thousand others will applaud our exploits much more heartily, if our princes and rich people this winter keep up a brilliant appearance. Let me add, that on the contrary our houses closed, &c. announce distrust, with respect to events or finances, &c. &c. Wood is now prodigiously dear, and if the winter is severe, the poor will have great reason to complain; a few liberalities of this description, granted to the people, in the name of their majesties, would have an excellent effect. Before the revolution, all the princes of the blood caused fires to be lighted before the palace-courts; I should be happy to see such fires before the Tuileries in the absence of your majesties, if you should not return before the month of December, and I should also be glad

that money were paid to the curates to purchase wood for the poor. This sort of liberality has always a great influence on the people. Lastly, I should wish that on each victory, all persons who are in high situations, should give fêtes and have rejoicings—the courts of their houses illuminated—a great dinner—a concert—and at their doors a distribution of food for the poor. All this without having the air of being done *by command*, and as if it came from the feelings of the parties themselves.

"When the houses of the great are opened, women will dress, the merchants and workmen will be pleased; and from time to time a few public liberalities to the poor will complete the union of all hearts, and induce them all to form the same wishes."*

The following I wrote at another time to the emperor:—

"At length the Institute has bethought itself of its duties, and has decreed a prize to the fine

* These counsels were, in a great measure, immediately followed, so that in a short time people spoke of nothing but the *Asiatic* luxury of the court and of individuals.—(*Note by the Author.*)

poem, "*The Tombs of Saint Denis*," by M. de Treneuil, who has added to his work an admirable piece on the *Expiatory Altars*—a piece, which of course can only be in praise of the emperor. I have only once heard it read, and I can only recollect of it the two following splendid lines :—

> Et sans verser le sang d'une seule victime,
> L'hommage expiatoire a surpassé le crime.

"There is a fine exhortation, recommending fidelity to the French, and many other things of great beauty. M. de Treneuil is at once *a good Frenchman, an affectionate subject, and a true poet*. His character is full of frankness and honour, he is loved and esteemed by all who know him: yet he has been the occasion, or rather the subject of terrible scenes at the Institute. He has been attacked with fury—with madness—but he has been valiantly defended with all the advantage which justice and reason united can give. These details are very curious. M. de Treneuil has on his side the public and all honest men—his enemies know this, and for that reason they have determined on softening their proceedings towards him."

"The emperor admirably confirms the words of

Masellon—that *princes are upon the earth a visible providence*. How well he recompenses merit and virtue! Madame de Montesquiou is appointed *governante*. This is a choice, which in spite of the envy of some, is universally approved. I know a person who has a high name and a great deal of merit, who would admirably fill the place of her deputy—it is Madame de Lascours. She is of the proper age, she is thirty-two; her manners are charming and elegant; her reputation irreproachable, and her understanding the most remarkable with which I am acquainted among women. Her talents are beautiful, she is a musician, she plays on the piano, and paints in miniature exquisitely—but what it is impossible to praise too highly in her, is her disposition, and her agreeable manners in society. She is the only woman, without exception, whom I regard as so reasonable, so prudent, so correct, and yet so amiable, and I know that all her virtues and good qualities are genuine. I confess, that if friendship lays one open to the charge of partiality, I must have some for her; yet my esteem is only founded on the respect which I have for her virtues, and the infinite pleasure I have enjoyed in her society. I have been separated from her for the last five months, and I have so many occu-

pations, that my correspondence by way of letters is very irregular. I am totally unacquainted with her ideas about this situation; I only know that none could fill it better, and that besides her solid merits, she would have an air of fashion—a matter which seems to me by no means trifling, especially at court, where every thing ought to be dignified.

"My work on women is at length altogether stopped! I have solicited in vain permission that it should be censured from the proofs —*after a month's suspense*, this is refused me. I must give up the manuscript, of which I have no copy, full as it is of corrections and alterations, and scarcely legible. I must wait for a six week's examination, and undergo the unreasonable criticisms of a malevolent censor, who is, perhaps, my personal enemy. This is very lamentable; with intentions so pure as mine, and a heart so truly French.

"Cardinal Maury will be an excellent archbishop; he has a great deal of talent, with a sound understanding, which is at once quick and clear, firm and conciliating; he would have made a very good ambassador. He told me that nothing could be compared to the emotion he felt on taking his oath, and that the emperor, when he grants

favour does so with so much grace and majesty, that a person would feel happy at the moment, in yielding his life for him. He told me, that he trembled so as to be unable to support himself; not that he is naturally timid; for he might have said to the emperor what an old officer, intimidated by the brilliancy of royalty, said to Louis XIV. 'Sire, I do not tremble thus before your enemies!"

"Favours which have not been solicited, and which are accorded to you by surprise, have a double value. Gratitude is then a thousaud times more lively; it is proportioned to your astonishment. A lucky but unexpected event, forms for ever an epoch in one's life; and the pleasure is far higher to the benefactor, because the benefit is more generously bestowed."

The following is another fragment of this correspondence:—

"The literature of Paris at the present moment presents nothing now of any interest, except three excellent articles by M. de Bonald,* which have

* M. de Bonald, sprung from an old family of Rouergue, composed during the time of the emigration a work entitled *A Theory of Power, Political and Religious,* in which he predicted the return of the Bourbons to France. This work was seized by order

appeared in *The Mercury*. In the two first he compares atheism to political anarchy, the principles of democracy to deism, and those of the Catholic religion to those of monarchical government. All this admirably well expressed and proved, will produce luminous and sublime results. His third article is a fine critique on the tragedy of the *Templars*—the only one, in my opinion, in which there is at once judgment, talent, politeness, and impartiality. I do not at all know M. de Bonald, nor am I the friend of any of his friends; I have never had any correspondence or connexion with him even of an indirect kind; but I am not the less on that account of opinion that he is a great writer, that he has an understanding, full of acuteness, and a prodigious genius. With these talents, which are of the highest kind, this author lives peaceably on his estate; he is virtuous, he is not an intriguer, he keeps himself retired;—all this is rare.

"There have appeared in print some letters from conscripts—and dialogues of conscripts, written with the best intentions; but in order to

of the Executive Directory. In 1808, Napoleon named M. de Bonald, Counsellor of the Imperial University, which place he has filled since the restoration. M. de Bonald was elected a Member of the French Academy in March 1816.—(*Note by the Editor.*)

succeed, these things should be written in the best taste; if they are not extremely clever, they fail in their purpose. I have been told that they are written *for the people*; but since I have permission to speak all my thoughts, and as they are of no consequence, it seems to me that it is not right to allow the people to suppose that we write for them in this style: for they infer from this that we wish to gain their opinions because we fear them. These small means were frequently employed at a time which we wish to forget: but in our days of glory they are at best useless. We ought to love the people, and to interest ourselves in their happiness, but we ought to be indifferent to their suffrages, on general occasions: for doubtless the sovereign ought personally to desire their love. But the mob has thus much of excellence —it naturally loves whatever it admires—especially the French, the first of all nations. I therefore think that the police ought not to think of having *composed for the people* any thing but songs of a gay cast, fit to be sung in the streets. These have not the importance of pamphlets, and are suited at the same time to the national character; the music animates the words, and the songs are retained in the memory. This plan, which has been employed at all times, is the only one of

the kind which is good without the consequent inconveniences of the rest.

"I have discovered an expense to which the go vernment goes, which is altogether useless, and even hurtful. The *Conservatoire de Musique* gives prizes for composition, and whoever obtains the prize is sent into Italy at the expense of the government, to *finish their studies in musical composition.* It is as if one should send a geometrician into another country to perfect himself in geometry. The rules of composition are the same every where. They are equally well understood in England or Holland, where musical genius is not rife as in Italy. It is by no means necessary to travel to Italy for the perfection of taste. Their instrumental music is very inferior to ours. Our composers are excellent. Le Sucur is very learned; Cherubini is one of the first composers of Europe, and much younger than Paesiello. He is, perhaps, the leading master at present. Besides, it is not in music as in painting, it is requisite for one to go and see the works of the great painters, but the great composers can multiply theirs by the hand of the engraver. At five hundred leagues distance we may study their *chef-d'œuvres* just as well as if they themselves were at hand. Those young men whom we should send as far, would

lose in Italy their time, their morals, and their health. That is all the gain that would ensue from such ill-placed munificence. It would be much better to give them an allowance. From attachment to my sovereign and my country, I desire that they should come amongst us, to form and instruct themselves, and that we should not evince (at all events, uselessly,) the bad taste of seeking elsewhere for information and talent. It even appears to me desirable, that we should dispense with sending the painters to Italy. The expedition is not, perhaps, of greater service to them than to the architects."

Here is yet another fragment which I addressed to the emperor.

"Those who regret times past, only to undervalue and often to calumniate the present, lament without ceasing the decline of literature, of arts, and of manners. In all ages, certain individuals have exhibited this rage for detraction. During each succeeding reign, they have lauded the preceding one, in order to depreciate that under which they lived, except when the last sovereign was a sanguinary tyrant, and when they resorted to eulogies on the other kings, his contemporaries,

or took refuge in comparisons between the existing time, and the *age of gold*. This captious spirit has produced more ridiculous exaggerations, and more falsehoods, than flattery itself.

"After several years of bloody anarchy, after the reign of callous villains, who sought to annihilate religion, and consequently, morality, should we be astonished at the alteration which may be remarked in politeness, in manners, and morals? It must be confessed, that this alteration is so great among the people generally, that we cannot turn to any epoch at which it was more striking and sorrowful. The people, misled by the orators of the tribunes, by the public impieties which they called fêtes, by the pamphlets composed for them, and again, by the *twopenny libels*, the people no longer resemble, (at least, in Paris,) what they formerly were; and in this metamorphosis all has been lost. But the revolution has not had nearly so much influence upon other classes of society. It would not be difficult to prove, that the corruption of morals was greater in France during the period of the regency, than it is at present, because the rigour of the latter years of Louis XIV., superseded, in almost all the characters of that time, a system more or less false, and until his death all these hypocrites kept on their

masks. It is only requisite to peruse the memoirs of that period, to be convinced of the truth of this. The depravity of manners was indeed then so great, that a woman's pen cannot draw the picture. We are convinced that the present era furnishes a wide field for the satirist; but while it is thus decried, it offers, at the same time many things, both general and particular, worthy of high commendation. Under the *ancien regime*, several females, (in time of peace,) have followed their husbands into garrison, but there were no examples of women traversing the seas, in order to avoid separation, in the midst of the horrors of a sanguinary and cruel war, or refusing to quit their husbands during the most deadly contagion. I have known one who, scarcely convalescent from a long and dangerous malady, hesitated not to follow her husband, even to Constantinople.

"With regard to literature, it is certain that we have never seen so many bad works issue from the press; but that must be an unavoidable evil, when all the world writes. It is only necessary to select, and the most delicate taste may be fully satisfied.

"It appears to me, that when we can cite the names of Messrs. Chateaubriand, Fontanes, Bonald, Delille, Michaud, Dussault, Jay, De Ba-

rante, De Treneuil, Arnault, Duval, Picard, Etienne, Le Comte de Ségur, De Choiseul-Gouffier, Madame de Staël, and many others, so justly celebrated, and so many agreeable points as French literature possesses; it appears to me that, such as it is, at this moment it still keeps the first rank among all polished nations.*

"As to the arts, who can say they are on the decline, when we see the works of David, Gerard, Guerin, Girodet, Le Thiers, Robert Lefevre, and Vanspaendonck, together with those of our sculptors; and lastly, the product of the arts, in all their branches, exhibited this year at the Louvre."

"I should wish that two persons should be appointed to write the campaigns of his Majesty; Louis XIV. named Boileau and Racine his historiographers; but in choosing contemporary historians, they are always apt to be accused of flattery. It is not thus with warlike affairs, for they are positive facts, to which every brave man in the country can bear witness. We can write these narratives with as much interest during the lifetime of the hero, as after his death; and perhaps

* This was written in 1806. Since that time we have lost, of the persons cited above, Delille, Treueuil, Choiseul-Gouffier, Fontanes, and Dussault.—(*Note by the Editor.*)

it is better to write them during his life-time, because the work will gain by being read over by him in manuscript; it is the part of the conquering general to correct the author. Such a work would be an admirable monument of the glory of the French, which has been carried to its height merely by the valour of the hero who governs them. It appears to me, that we should see in such a work something unique—that the envy and the bad faith of the enemies of France have provoked, and even necessitated these wonderful exploits; and that France must have been dismembered and lost, if Europe had not been subdued. All the foreign powers swore at the time of the revolution, when Louis XVI. was dethroned—they made an oath to annihilate France, *for the sake of example*.

"I was in England at the time when the republic was decreed. Mr. Davis and Mr. Sheridan told me then, that from that moment it was absolutely necessary that France should either conquer Europe, or be annihilated; that her abasement was not sufficient for the alarmed powers—that her destruction was necessary for the security of their thrones. In 1793 I was in Switzerland; there appeared at that time a pamphlet, (I believe by Mallet du Pan,) which made a great noise, and which I read with horror. This worthy

Frenchman said, that it was absolutely necessary, as soon as the throne should be again re-established, so to annihilate all traces of the revolution, that even the good which it had done was to be abolished; to replace all as it formerly was, to restore all our conquests, and punish all who had the slightest employment, who had taken an oath, or served in any grade of military officership, in order that, for an example to the universe, we might say with truth, that nothing but evil and calamities had resulted from the revolution. No one pretended that France should be any thing less than destroyed, but it was said, that the well being of the world required it. In this way, the conspiracy was formed and established long before the triumphs of the emperor, so that it required little short of a series of miracles to undo all these plots—in other words, to do all that the emperor has done. So that never victories or conquests have been legitimized and ennobled by such powerful interests, seeing that the salvation of France depended upon them. This is what should be developed in the brilliant narrative of these miraculous campaigns, and this would give a character altogether particular to the work. The memoirs should be furnished by the soldiers, and two men of letters should employ

them. It appears to me, that there are three persons worthy of writing such a history, M. de Bonald, M. Fiévée, whose political reflections would be so admirable; and M. Dussault, who writes with an elegance and purity, which are most remarkable at the present day. All this is only a thought of my own; for not only I have never heard such a thing talked of by any one, but I may add also, that I have never spoken of the thing to any one whatever."

I published "*The Religious Monuments,*" at the period when the pope came into France; I offered him a copy, and the holy father had the goodness to thank me, by a letter, which Cardinal de Bayane wrote me in his name. The pope never writes with his own hand to a female; his greatest token of condescension is to use for the purpose that of a cardinal. The following is a copy of the letter which he condescended to dictate for me on this occasion.

"Madam,

"Of the two copies of the excellent work which you have sent me through M. de Cabre, after having read with avidity the one destined for myself, I have presented the other to the pope,

rendering him an account of my perusal of it His Holiness, who was acquainted with you already by your reputation, has commanded me to return you a thousand acknowledgments on his part, and to testify to you the extreme satisfaction with which he sees you employ, for the honour and service of religion, the happy genius which God has been pleased to endow you with.

"After having executed, Madam, the orders of the holy father, if I were not aware of the importance of your time, I could fill whole pages in assuring you of the sentiments of admiration which the perusal of your works has excited in me.

"I have the honour to be, with respect,

"Madam,

"Your most humble,

"And most obedient servant,

"THE CARDINAL DE BAYANE.

"*Pavillon de Flore, Dec.* 14, 1804.

"I have not omitted also to give your letter to His Holiness, who has ordered me to answer it for him, in the terms which I have transcribed."

His Holiness had the goodness to send me a chaplet. I went to the Tuileries to receive his benediction, and Casimir, then just emerging from

boyhood, accompanied me. He was so touched with the majesty of the pope, that the latter particularly remarked and caressed him.

In the *Religious Monuments*, are to be found several curious researches, and many interesting details. The Abbé Fraysinnous did that work the honour of citing it in his eloquent conferences,* and recommended his auditors to read a chapter on the pictures representing the Holy Virgin. The plan I have followed in the arrangement of the work has been blamed, and with reason; in describing the *religious monuments*, I ought to have described them in the order of the countries where they exist, not in the order of their titles; for example, I range under the words *cathedral* and *chapel*, all the cathedrals and chapels in Europe. Instead of this, I ought to have given an account of the churches to be found in each country; for example, all those of France, then those of Italy, and so on. I followed a bad arrangement, because I had first of all written, while abroad, a *Diction-*

* The eloquence of which was so persuasive, that by means of these conferences, a number of young men were converted, who went only to ridicule what they heard. The emperor, without any reason or pretext, however frivolous, issued an order to stop these conferences, but the virtuous Abbé Fraysinnous acquired only the more popularity.—*(Note by the Author.)*

ary of the Bible. When I saw religion re-established in France, I fancied that amidst a clergy that was then new forming, the title of my work might have something about it *too ambitious for a woman;* I accordingly wrote the *Religious Monuments;* but in order to profit by the articles already written upon those monuments, I preserved the dictionary form; I have, however, desired my publisher to change it, which assuredly he will do in a new edition.

Nothing can give an idea of the paternal aspect of Pius VII.; of the calmness and majesty of his air, of his splendid appearance in the grand and magnificent gallery of Diana, then filled with persons of both sexes, the most distinguished for their talents, merit, rank, and reputation. Every physiognomy, without exception, expressed the most profound veneration; and I felt so much pleasure in contemplating this religious and imposing spectacle, that when I left the gallery, and went with M. de Cabre to pay a visit to the Cardinal de Bayane, I found it impossible to speak of any thing else; the cardinal informed me that this feeling had always been so general, that the best observer would not have been able, in the presence of the pope, to distinguish the persons who were religious from those who were not so.

While on this subject, he told me that M. de la Lande, the astronomer, had come some days previously, to the pope's public audience; and that the excessive ugliness of that famous atheist having struck the holy father, he approached M. de la Lande, and said to him: "I am delighted to see, by your presence here, that you deny, in so personal a manner, the horrible calumny which attributes to you a book* unworthy, in all respects, of such a personage as you." At these words, M. de la Lande fell at the feet of the sovereign pontiff, who gave him his benediction.

On another occasion, the pope perceived at one extremity of the gallery a young man, who affected airs of mockery the most indecent. It was the first time that ever the pope had an opportunity of remarking such insulting behaviour; he walked up to the place where the young man stood, and when he reached him he said, "Young man, kneel down, and receive my benediction; the blessing of an old man always brings down good." The young man, touched to the soul, prostrated himself on the ground, and his tears began to flow.

At the end of this conversation, the cardinal took leave of us, as he was about to sit down at

* The Dictionary of Atheism.

table with the pope, and dinner was already served; he asked me if I would wish to pass through the dining-room, as the pope would not enter for ten or twelve minutes. I accepted the offer eagerly, and we immediately went into the dining-room; I stopped a moment, and seeing a sumptuous entertainment laid out, I said with a smile, that the pope was certainly fond of good cheer. "No, Madam," replied the cardinal, "on the contrary, his food is always that of a *minim*. This repast is for us; the pope eats nothing but some vegetables prepared with oil, in little dishes; and such are constantly his repasts." He added, that the pope had the goodness to remain at table during the whole time of dinner, though his own repast did not last a quarter of the time of that of the cardinals; that he did not rise from table, and only remained there to converse, which he did with equal affability and talent.

The pope came to Paris with no other design but to save religion, and it is certain that none of his predecessors ever took a step so useful to the sacred cause; he firmly declined all the temporal advantages which he might have drawn from it, and which were offered to him; he travelled at his own expense, and would accept nothing in lieu of the costs incurred by him during his stay

in Paris. The Cardinal told us, that he had been robbed on the way of a very valuable box, containing his richest and most beautiful chaplets. The Holy Father did not conceal from himself the effects which would be produced in Europe by his granting a public mark of esteem and admiration which Charlemagne himself had not obtained, though the benefactor of the church. It is well known that Pius VII. publicly said, that he was sure this solemn act would excite a great deal of discontent among the princes, his contemporaries. "However," added he, "I shall prevent France from becoming protestant, and my disinterestedness will prove that such is the sole motive of my conduct."

It required, in fact, views of this religious and profound nature, and sentiments as pure as those of his Holiness, to sustain an old man amidst the dangers of a route so long and so fatiguing, undertaken and continued in the most rigorous season of the year. The heavens blessed his courage, and his presence of itself revived faith in the bosoms of all, rendering respectable, even to the unbelieving, the faith which could inspire so much strength and greatness of soul.

I did not lose a single occasion during the pope's residence at Paris, of seeing the Holy Father in

the churches, or even of seeing him pass through the streets. I felt the greatest desire to ascertain by my own feelings whether the portrait of him by David was as fine and as good a likeness as had been stated: I was charmed with the portrait, but the Queen of Naples (afterwards Queen of Spain) assured me that the pope's head was still finer in the picture of the coronation, which was then only to be seen in the workshop of David. I signified my regret at being unable to go there, as I had strongly blamed, in my *Precis de Conduite*, the actions and the political opinions of David, and as I supposed, with great appearance of probability, that he would refuse to receive me. Upon this the queen had the goodness to say that she would take me with her, which she did the following day. David received me without any ill-feeling; on my side, I praised, with perfect sincerity, not the entire picture, which may be found fault with in many respects, but the figure of the pope, which is quite admirable. Somebody said to David one day that every one thought, and with reason, that he had made the Empress Josephine ridiculously young: "*Go and tell her so*," replied David.

M. de Cabre, my friend, who was intimately acquainted with the Marshal Bernadotte, and who was

in the habit of paying his respects frequently to the Queen of Naples, induced her majesty to express a desire to be acquainted with me; she discovered so much kindness for me, and I found in her so many virtues, that I became attached to her from my heart. Through a singularity which belonged to the nobleness of her sentiments and her manners, she constantly recalled to my mind the remembrance of the princesses of the old court. She had, for example, all the air and all the state of the last Princess of Conti; if heaven had decreed she should be born the heiress to a throne, it could not have given her a more beneficent disposition; this great quality, which ought to characterize every prince, was perfected in her by piety the most sincere, and a total absence of all ostentation. The following is one trait among others which I must cite. The Priest of Saint Sulpice (parish of the Luxembourg) remarked, that for four or five months, the person who solicited for the poor at nine o'clock, brought every day in her purse a piece of forty francs; it was evident that the charity came from the same hand, and it was soon found out that the giver was a veiled lady, who stood always by the same pillar in a corner of the church. She was followed, and it was discovered that this charitable person, who had so

little ostentation, was the Queen of Spain, who went regularly to that church every morning, unattended by either footman, or suite, and, as has been stated, always veiled. Those who found out this magnificent giver of charity, had the indiscretion to divulge her name. From this moment the queen suppressed her anonymous benefits, but the poor lost nothing by it—her generosity only changed its form and place.

It was about this time that I took the liberty of recommending to that princess a young person whom I only knew by her misfortunes, and who was the more interesting, as she joined to a pretty face, great youth, and the most deplorable poverty. The queen gave me the address of one of her almoners, who was charged with the distribution of the succours she granted to the unfortunate. The young person, after receiving what was destined to her, called on me, and told me, that on her arrival at the door of the almoner's house, she found the court and staircase so blocked up with poor persons, that she could not succeed in seeing him for two hours, and that it was impossible to get to him at once without some risk. The young person was soon placed in a community, where she improved her talents for drawing orna-

ments and embroidering; her allowance has always been regularly paid.

I had already had the honour to receive several times at the Arsenal, Madame Bernadotte, wife of the marshal, (sister to the Queen of Spain,) who had at that time all the charms derived from a very pretty face and the most agreeable manners. I was struck with the harmony which existed between her amiable face, her conversation, and her talents. I met her for the first time at a dinner-party M. de Cabre's. I was placed by the side of the marshal, who looked astonishingly like all the portraits of the great Condé. His fine appearance, the nobleness of his manners, and his politeness, aided this glorious resemblance, which he completed in other respects by his great and warlike qualities. I believe I have already stated that on leaving the table I said in a low tone to M. de Cabre, that the marshal had the manners of a king. I did not think at the time that I was uttering a prophecy. He afterwards returned to Paris as crown Prince of Sweden. I went to pay my respects to him, and found him just as polished and obliging in manners as before his extraordinary rise. In short, he thought sufficiently well of himself personally (and he had a good right to do

so) not to fancy it necessary to change any of his external habits. He had not substituted an affable and *patronizing* air to his natural gracefulness and benevolence.

I fixed a day at the Arsenal for receiving company, but happily *routs* were as yet unknown in France; I made out a list, which was subsequently, however, much enlarged, because I inserted in it the names of several foreigners; but at first it was confined to persons remarkable for their wit, their disposition, or their talents.

Madame d'Harville, my old and faithful friend: the Baroness de Lascours, whose portrait I have already drawn, in a way which all those who know her will agree is not too flattering a likeness. M. de Lascours, her husband, equally estimable for his noble sentiments and his capacity in matters of business; and Mesdames de Châtenay. I have already rendered frequent justice throughout my works to the merit, the information, and the talents of Madame Victorine de Châtenay, who has formed the happiness of a mother as tender as she is virtuous, and of a father worthy of being the head of such a family. The Princess of Baufremont, (afterwards Countess de Choiseul,) of whom I have already spoken, and to whom my family has the honour of being allied. She is a person whose

originality has always been to me as striking as her virtues and her talents have seemed worthy of my constant admiration; she joins to extreme vivacity the best and most solid understanding and the soundest discretion; and though she has an appearance of thoughtlessness, no woman in the world is better qualified to judge correctly or to give better counsels. In her early youth she was thought to have an appearance of coquetry—but this was a mistake. She never had a wish to please, but through benevolence or through sentiment; yet her modesty is incomparable—she has no desire of shining; she knows the dangers of it, and her mind, which is strong and full of feeling, disdains its glories; but in spite of her modesty, she is not humble, for she judges and appreciates herself as she would another. Madame Kennens, whose talents, mildness, sensibility, and powers of writing render her acquaintance so agreeable and so lasting. Madame de Vannoz, the fortunate rival of Delille, relative to the poem of *Conversation*, and whose literary reputation does not require my eulogies. Madame de Brosseron, with whom I became acquainted in an agreeable and singular manner, of which I shall hereafter give the detail; Madame Roger, (afterwards Countess of Montholon,) two persons full

of amenity, who have every requisite for rendering their society charming. Madame Hainguerlot, to whom M. de Cabre introduced me on my arrival at Paris, and whom I found to be as she really was, full of talent. Her conversation was equally piquant and animated; my acquaintance with her lasted several years; afterwards the bad state of her health compelled her to make some voyages, and to visit the waters; I then altogether lost sight of her, Madame Cabarus, (afterwards Princess of Chimay). During my residence at Berlin my daughter wrote to me to say that she had contributed to save her life. When she had the goodness to call on me, and even to pay me the first visit, I received her with equal pleasure and gratitude. Her intimate conversation, which is full of curious anecdotes, which she alone could have gathered, had the interesting and rare singularity of being always exempt from scandal and declamation. She is, perhaps, the person, who, of all women, has rendered the greatest number of services—and who consequently has made the greatest number of ingrates. She was still exceedingly handsome, and her beauty was generally pleasing; there was a great air of nobleness in her shape and carriage, and the most agreeable expression in her smile. My friend, Madame de

Bon, the translator of Sir Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake*, who is so passionate in her friendships—a quality which is the more charming as it never leads her to exact too much; she is capable of a generous profusion of attentions, and is never wounded by neglect nor even by your apparent neglect of her, provided she can count in essential matters on the solidity of your sentiments. Lastly, Mesdames de Bellegarde, who may be cited as models of sisterly affection and of loveliness, amiability and benevolence.

M. Briffaut, who was then very young, and who already announced the talents he has since discovered:* he had naturally so good a taste, that independently of all reflection, he was offended at the bad tone which then sometimes pervaded society; he loved old traditions, and began to attach himself to me in order to collect them. I was delighted to talk to him about old times; he comprehended every thing, felt every thing, and listened so earnestly! He was right to look

* He has just published in May of the present year (1825,) a charming dialogue, in which one of the supposed speakers, M. de Fontanes, (who is now dead,) expresses himself as he would have written. I shall return in detail towards the end of this work, to this dialogue, which is so worthy of being quoted.—(*Note by the Author.*)

back—he looked for another age—in his verses are to be found the spirit of that of Louis XIV.

M. Laborie, who is as obliging as he is clever, and who wants nothing in order to be completely amiable, but to seem to have less business to do, and to be less *in a hurry:* you always think yourself the subject of his twentieth visit, for he enters breathless, and wiping his face; you are delighted to see him, but he is scarcely seated when he looks at his watch with an air of alarm; he discovers that an appointment calls him away, he rises, and disappears—and the only fruit of his visit is to leave regrets for its shortness behind.

M. Pieyre, of whom I have already spoken and with so much pleasure. M. Millevoye, a young poet, whose face, verses, and disposition are equally pleasing. He wrote some charming verses for my *Garland:* I do not quote them here, because I do not wish to extract any thing from this little manuscript work.*

M. de Charbonniéres, a sure and faithful friend, who would have enjoyed a great reputation as a poet if he had made a better choice of his subjects.† M. Descherny, a passionate disciple of J. J. Rous-

* This young poet is since dead.—(*Note by the Author.*)

† This was written a few years before his death.—(*Note by the Author.*)

seau, and an outrageous philosophist, who pleased me much, because he was accustomed to society, he was amiable, and did not proclaim his principles and opinions any where but in his writings; he had besides an accurate taste in the fine arts, and presented the singular spectacle of a man of seventy-two, who had still a very fine voice, and sung after the best methods.*

M. de Cabre, my old friend, who, without being in orders, had been an abbé before the revolution: it was he, who in a party when some person asked him to draw the portrait of a lady who was attractive by her graces and even by means of her defects, wrote on the spot this impromptu:—

Pourquoi me demander ce que c'est qu'une femme,
A moi dont le destin est d'ignorer l'amour!
De l'aveugle affligé vous déchirerez l'âme,
Si vous lui demandez ce que c'est qu'un beau jour!

M. de Coriolis, whom I should love, if I knew nothing farther of him than his *Messe de Minuit*, one of the most charming fugitive pieces in verse which has been written for a long time, but who besides, by the equality of his humour, the agreeableness of his conversation, and his virtues,

* He died at upwards of eighty.—*(Note by the Author.)*

unites so many powers of pleasing, and so many qualities for acquiring general estimation.

M. de Courchamp, whom no one could ever accuse of pedantry or pretension in company, though he has had from his earliest youth an astonishing fund of information and many pleasing accomplishments; which is of itself a high praise of the whole life of a man of the world or of letters; for it is impossible to have read so much, and to have acquired such various and profound knowledge, without having great firmness of character, a taste for order, and a passion for study. Intriguers and men of ambition will never obtain such a fortunate result from the employment of their time. Besides, M. de Courchamp unites to unchanging political and religious principles, the most searching and piquant talent and perfect goodness of heart.

M. de Treneuil, whose fine verses have nobly expiated the lines of another poet, M. Lebrun, in his ode, styled *Patriotic*. The following is the execrable strophe which provoked the profanation of the royal Tombs at Saint Denis:—

Purgeons le sol des patriotes
Par des rois encore infecté.
La terre de la liberté
Rejette les os des despotes.

De ces monstres divinisés,
Que tous les cercueils soient brisés!
Que leur mémoire soit flétrie!
Et qu'avec leurs mânes errans,
Sortent du sein de la patrie
Les cadavres de ces tyrans!

This strophe, (says M. de Treneuil, in his notes to his fine poem, *The Tombs of Saint Denis,*) inasmuch as it outrages only kings in their coffins, is one of the most *humane* in the ode, styled *patriotic* . . . If poetry does not live, and cannot exist but in religion, in pathetic and tender affections, in noble and virtuous sentiments, the author of these *patriotic* odes has terribly mistaken his sacred ministry.

Let me add to this, that M. Lebrun, in spite of his political and republican enthusiasm, made up matters very comfortably with the Imperial Government, of which he was a great admirer.

I saw M. Desprès for the first time, at the residence of the amiable and virtuous Queen of Spain; it is impossible to meet him without wishing to know him, and you are grieved if you are forgotten by him when you have once known him.

M. Radet, to whom I owe my gratitude for having embellished several of my novels, which he brought on the stage with complete success.

M. Dussault, whom I may praise for three things not common at the present day: he was at all times a faithful friend, a good writer, and an impartial journalist.*

I became acquainted with Mr. Crawfurd, through his fine collection of historical portraits; it is impossible to imagine any thing of this description more curious or interesting. Mr. Crawfurd was a worthy appreciator of his gallery, which is not always the case with amateurs of the fine arts; he had the magnificent gallantry, as I have stated, to present me with a fine full length of Madame de Maintenon; but a portrait which in that rich collection outshone all the rest in design, colouring, expression, composition, and the importance of the person represented, was that of Bossuet. If one had never seen engravings of the author of *Oraisons Funèbres*, of so many admirable *Sermons*, of the *Variations*, &c., it would be sufficient, having read these works, to cast your eyes on the picture, in order to recognise the likeness, and to make you cry out—"That is the great Bossuet!" . . . . I never saw any thing which struck me so much.†

* He was lost to letters and to friendship in the present year, (1825.)—*(Note by the Author.)*

† M. Crawfurd is no longer living. I do not know what has

I was also in the habit of seeing two men of the world, as remarkable for their talents, and the mildness of their manners, as for their fits of absence—Messieurs de Sabran and de Laborde. I have already quoted M. de Sabran's graceful and clever reply, which he made to me one day when I talked to him of his absent moods. Besides, these two persons, who scarcely listen but as it were by chance, are so charming both with respect to talent and disposition, that their fits of absence have no character of insolence about them; they only inspire you with the desire of trying to fix their attention; they have no need of being *apropos*, in order to please. Absent people have, in general, an air of nature and frankness, which gives them, when they have talents, an appearance of the most amiable originality; we pardon their blunders, and we are so flattered by their attention! they neither require flattering preparations, nor studied compliments; they would make bad courtiers, but they are excellent friends.

The following is a comic and novel trait, (in the *absent way*,) of M. de Laborde: he was invited to a marriage; on arriving at the church, he placed himself in front of the grand altar, opposite

become of the incomparable portrait of which I have been speaking.—*(Note by the Author.)*

the new married couple; and at the moment when they pronounced the irrevocable vow, he approached his neighbour and said, "Will you go as far as the burial-ground?" . . . He thought he was at a funeral!

M. de Laborde is a passionate lover of all the fine arts, and a real connoisseur in music; he was an enthusiastic admirer of the incomparable talents of Casimir Baeker, my pupil, and wrote a dissertation, equally luminous and learned, on the extraordinary discoveries, and the astonishing effects produced on the harp by Casimir, and which he alone, up to this day, can produce. In this essay, which was printed, and which has been translated into English, M. de Laborde clearly explains, by these discoveries and effects, several passages in the ancient writers of Greece, on the lyre of the ancients, which till that time were not at all understood.

Among the men of fashion whom I saw at my house on the Saturdays, and who took a leading rank in society, were Messieurs de Lascours;*

* I have already spoken in my *Prisoners*, of the benevolent actions performed by M. de Lascours, at Auch, where he was prefect, and where he left behind him, on quitting that office, unanimous and well-founded regrets. Good, honourable, religious, and full of ability, he has at all times merited the esteem

d'Estournelle, who joins to the agreeable manners of a man of the world, a great turn for business, and a talent for poetry; Carion de Nisas, so well known by his dramatic talent; De Choiseul, author of the first and best picturesque voyage;* no conversation retraced better than that of M. de Choiseul, the good times of the French society; no one ever related anecdotes with more grace, nor were there ever manners more noble or more agreeable. Praise of a more substantial kind might be given him for his honourable and excellent principles, which he has never belied, either in France or in foreign countries.

The Cardinal Maury,† whose talents as an orator have obtained so much *éclat*, and whose conversation, full of piquant anecdotes, has so many charms.

of all who had any acquaintance with him.—*(Note by the Author.)*

* The drawings of this voyage are as beautiful as the work itself is well written.—*(Note by the Author.)*

† He said many *bon mots*, and often gave repartees of the most brilliant description, made on the instant. The following had prodigious success in this way, and was universally cited. One day, in presence of Napoleon, and a great number of courtiers, he had an earnest discussion with M. de . . . . who concluded by saying to him rudely: "It is well known M. le Cardinal, that, in your heart, you think yourself above the whole world." "No,

M. de Sennovert, the man of all the world who possesses the most various information, and one of those who discourses in the best style on the arts, literature, politics, and the lesser interests of society.*

M. Marigné, who made his verses so charming, that we could not avoid a feeling of regret that his muse, confined to the narrow circle of private society, consecrated all her strains to friendship.

And, lastly, M. Denon. His fine cabinet of curiosities attracted towards him all the amateurs of such matters; whilst the amiable reception and pleasant intercourse of the possessor, supplied a still surer means of recalling them.†

Monsieur," replied the cardinal, "I am without pride when I judge myself, but I confess to some portion of it when I compare myself with certain other people." The cardinal died at Rome, in 1821.—*(Note by the Author.)*

* M. de Sennovert has since established himself at Petersburgh, where his own merit, and the superior discernment of the Emperor of Russia, have procured him honourable employment, which he has exercised throughout a great number of years. His health, however, has compelled him latterly to return to France. —*(Note by the Author.)*

† M. Denon has died in the course of the present year. The collections of his cabinet were all equally interesting in their particular way, more especially those of old varnished work, the most beautiful ever seen, and of works manufactured by savages;

After this nomenclature, it would have been appropriate to have given to these assemblies, (which lasted during nine years,) the title of *Bureaux d'Esprit*, which however was never done, neither during the time I was at *Belle-Chasse*, where I received in the same way, every Saturday, men of letters and of science, together with those members of society most distinguished by their wit.

I believe that, in general, when the lady who does the honours of a circle has no kind of pedantry, no one ventures to display any before her. Nevertheless, the assemblies of Madame du Deffand were denominated *Bureaux d'Esprit*, though the conversation was as amiable as various; besides, Madame du Deffand was as unaffected as I could be, and she was certainly far more amiable.

M. de Talleyrand came also very often to see me at the Arsenal; but, the more to enjoy the charm of his conversation, I received him always alone. This eminent man had naturally in his manner, and indeed the whole of his personal appearance, something cold and indifferent, which has more than once wounded those persons who were known to him but slightly. We excuse with difficulty

this latter could not from its nature be rich, but is complete and charming.—(*Note by the Author.*)

the bluntness of those persons whose reputation for merit and wit makes their suffrages desirable. But this apparent carelessness of M. Talleyrand gave far greater value to the particular marks of his interest and friendship. A sign of approbation, a benevolent smile, an attentive and softened air, are in him actual fascinations. His detractors even are forced to admit the superiority of his wit; of this wit, so flexible, which, without effort or pedantry, could on great occasions manifest itself with eclat, and which in familiar intercourse could alike enliven conversation with epigrams, or lend itself with inimitable grace to badinage the most frivolous. His enemies have not done justice to the goodness of his heart, a goodness of which I have myself, during the emigration, proved the effects, as I have related already in the course of these memoirs. M. de Talleyrand has never affected any pomp or parade about the services rendered by him. In general, his good deeds are done with so much simplicity, that he easily loses the remembrance of them unless he is reminded of them.

I enjoyed such complete tranquillity at Berlin, I admired so much the kindness and the equity of the government of that country, that I was desirous long since of doing homage to its sovereign;

but I wished that this tribute of recollection should be disinterested. Several persons among my friends at Berlin had counselled me to dedicate a work to the king: I replied that I should not be backward in doing so, when I should be no longer under his power. I projected then at the Arsenal the composition of the Life of Henry the Great, and the offering it, by a dedication, to the King of Prussia. I wrote to Berlin to obtain permission for this, and it was accorded me in a manner the most flattering, and in a letter full of kindness. I then collected all the materials for this history; but at length learnt with certainty, that I should not be suffered to publish it in France. I have written it since the first restoration; but as the Prussians had entered in the character of conquerors into Paris, I would not dedicate it at all to the King of Prussia. In order to dispense with this, and at the same time give a reason which should be perfectly true, I did myself the honour to write to this prince, that when I had solicited permission to render him this homage, I had not reflected that I should be obliged to speak of the Calvinists in a manner which would displease him, and that therefore I considered the offering him such a work would be a mark of disrespect.

This history was quite printed when Louis XVIII.

was obliged to quit France. I caused a copy to be presented to him on the eve of his departure, and the work was exposed for sale two days before the entry of Bonaparte into Paris. They proposed to me to insert cancels: I had written it without any intention of making allusions; but there were naturally to be found in it many things offensive to Bonaparte. I had the courage, however, to put forth my History without any alterations. It could not have appeared at a moment more disadvantageous for it: nevertheless, the edition sold rapidly; a second was required in the course of two months. A few of the journalists ventured to give an account of it, while in the fear of displeasing Bonaparte, no one dared to speak of it in detail, nor, (I will be bold to say,) with the commendation which it merited. Nevertheless, all seemed convinced that it was the only complete History of Henry IVth, and that all the portraits found therein were well drawn. Madame de Staël, in her late posthumous work, in speaking of Henry IVth, avails herself of my representation of that prince. She says that Henry was, of all our kings the most thoroughly French. The journalists in alluding to this expression, have designated it *sublime*. It is borrowed from my work, but they said

nothing whatever about it when that appeared: such is the spirit of party.

The first compilers of the *Journal des Débats*, and who have been since changed, charged M. Hoffman, with rendering an account of this work, a task which he performed with all the malignity which he is known to entertain against me, and with an ignorance which it was impossible to anticipate in one, who assumes the title of a literary man, (a title which in other instances he has merited.) For example, he confounds in his extracts a theological conference with a battle; he observes again on my want of tact, in putting forward an anecdote, which makes my hero appear the most ungrateful of men: when Henry wrote to the Duc d'Epernon, to testify to him his joy at the *brilliant victory which the Bishop of Evreux had obtained over the Calvinists, entirely beaten and vanquished;* and M. Hoffman declaims sentimentally against this *barbarous joy* of Henry. At what rejoiced Henry IVth? says he; at *blood poured forth,* at the defeat of the Calvinists, who had placed him upon the throne. What ingratitude! what horror! Thus, M. Hoffman believed, that under the reign of the most warlike of our kings, a *bishop* commanded our armies! Thus, he makes out of one

of the triumphs of religion, and a theological discussion, a bloody combat; and of a *bishop*, a general of the army wallowing in blood. This surely is a strange manner of reading and of criticising. As no journal would receive my contradiction of these inconceivable blunders, I inserted it two months after in the preface to the editions of Henry IV., and at the greatest length, quoting M. Hoffman's article literally, with the number of the Journal. There was no reply made to this. M. Hoffman maintained a rigorous silence.

I wrote at this time (at the Arsenal) the *Memoirs of Dangeau*. I made this immense compilation from a quarto manuscript in forty volumes and upwards, copied after the original in folio, which belongs to the family of Luynes. This copy, which is in a fine hand, is equally authentic with the original; it is *verbatim*, and was made with exact fidelity; nevertheless I was desirous of comparing a certain point, and Madame the Duchess of Luynes had the kindness to lend me her entire manuscript every day, during seven or eight months: with the aid of two or three friends, I amused myself by comparing several parts, and we found that the correctness was of the most scrupulous kind. There was also a folio copy in the king's library. I preferred working from that

at the Arsenal, on account of the beauty of the writing and the commodiousness of the size. As the library of the Arsenal belonged to the emperor, I obtained from him permission to mark in the margin by scoring those passages which I wished to extract, and which I was thus enabled to copy by degrees. Afterwards, I added my notes to my extracts. This abridgment may certainly be considered as the work most calculated to exhibit the greatness and goodness of Louis XIV., and the manners of the glorious era during which he reigned; but it required all the patience which I could muster to undertake the reading of the prodigious original; it required also the perusal of all the known memoirs of the times, in order to make a good extract, and to avoid tiresome or fastidious repetitions; it required, besides, for the purpose of adding useful notes, to have flourished at the court and in the high circles, and to have known all the traditions of that reign of the regency. I believe myself to have rendered an important service to literature by this prodigious exertion, which, as will appear in the sequel, entailed double labour on me. I devoted nine months to the necessary reading, which I pursued constantly every evening from eleven o'clock to three or four in the morning. This work being finished, the

permission to point it, which I had thought I might count on, was positively refused me. I gave my manuscript to the emperor, assuring him that I had kept no copy, which was perfectly true.

Some days after, I received from M. Lavalette a letter, couched in these terms:—

"His Majesty commands me, madam, to acquaint you that he accepts the offer which you have made him of the MS. Memoirs of the Marquis de Dangeau; he desires that I should send them to Boulogne. I request, madam, that you will transmit them to me promptly, in order that I may forward them to the emperor.

"I have received likewise his Majesty's commands to announce that he has been pleased to grant you a pension of six thousand francs on his treasury. I am charged to pay you this sum in monthly divisions. I beg you, madam, to let me know in what manner I may put this into effect.

"I esteem myself happy, madam, in being, under these circumstances, the organ of the emperor's will; and I earnestly hope that it may procure me sometimes the opportunity of present-

ing you the homage of that profound respect with which I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

"LAVALETTE."

I have preserved the original of this letter, as well as of a great number of interesting letters which I have received since my return to France, and which I have not introduced into these memoirs lest they should become too voluminous. I should state, also, that the *maximum* of the pensions awarded to literary persons was four thousand francs.

I had already regarded the emperor as my benefactor, from the generous offers which he caused M. de Remusat to make me, offers which I had refused, and which I owed to the friendship of M. Fiévée. Finding that I could not print the *Memoirs of Dangeau*, I seized the opportunity of proving my gratitude to Napoleon, by offering them to him. I made this gift with the more pleasure, as it afforded a pretext for the pension I was about to receive. The emperor put the greatest value on these memoirs; I knew, through M. Talleyrand, that he read them with the most lively satisfaction. M. de Talleyrand, indeed, gave me hopes that he should succeed in per-

suading the emperor to permit their being printed; and he used, to this end, all the power he had, but ineffectually. Having marked, in the margin of the large quarto manuscript, by underlining, all those passages extracted by me from the work through which I had laboured, I wrote to the emperor that if the manuscript remained in the public library of the Arsenal, where one might copy all that one read, others would not hesitate to turn my extracts to account, and to get them printed in foreign countries, seeing that they could not be published in France. This consideration struck the emperor, who instantly caused application to be made for this work to M. Ameilhon, and put it into his private library.

To make the reader acquainted with the value of these important memoirs, I will cite here a small part of the preface which preceded them.

"If candour, truth, and impartiality, together with the most *naïve* and faithful portraiture of the manners of a brilliant and celebrated court, suffice to render fascinating the perusal of an historical work, there can be no memoirs more interesting than those of the Marquis de Dangeau. They have also the inestimable advantage of offering a portrait the most striking and the least suspected of flattery that we have of one of our greatest

kings. The Marquis, who kept this journal during a great number of years with constant regularity, never would show a single line of it either to Louis XIV. or to Madame de Maintenon, his mistress. We find by the letters of the latter, that he always refused to communicate any part of it to her so long as she remained at court, and she read it for the first time after the death of the king, in her retreat at St. Cyr. We cannot too much admire this delicacy in a subject—in a courtier who dreaded to tarnish the purity of his recitals, and to weaken the authority of his eulogiums, by submitting them to the eyes of his sovereign. Madame de Maintenon, in her letters to Madame de Dangeau, often lauds the veracity of this journal, and the perfect accuracy of the facts which it details. 'I read with pleasure (she wrote to Madame de Dangeau) the *Memoires of M. de Dangeau*, I learn from them various things of which I was a witness, but which I had forgotten.' (4th June, 1716.) In another letter she says, 'The *Memoirs of M. de Dangeau* amuse me most agreeably; I have read them through—you know what that means.' (19th June, 1716.) She means that she passed over the long list of persons who attended the king on his excursions, the details of the promotions

in the army, and in the order of the Holy Ghost, of Saint Lazarus, &c. &c. and an infinite number of things of this description, which fill a prodigious space in these memoirs. She afterwards says, 'I wait with impatience for the continuation of these memoirs, which amuse me so much, that I am tempted to read them too fast.' (21st July.) 'I should like to know how far M. de Dangeau carries his memoirs, in order to read them faster or slower accordingly, for it is the only amusement I have left.' (20th February, 1717.) These passages sufficiently speak the opinion of Madame de Maintenon, though we might cite many others, which all express equal approbation of them. The applause of such a person ought at once to place the work at the head of even the most interesting memoirs relating to that great epoch of our national history. Madame de Maintenon had been always the best informed witness, and the most intimate confidante of all the facts and events retraced in these memoirs. Where *she* praises the accuracy of the narrative, it is quite impossible to call in question their scrupulous fidelity. Other judges also, whose suffrage is of the greatest weight, have shown the highest opinion of this journal: among others, the Abbé Choisy, the President Hainault, M. de La Beaumelle, &c. M. de Voltaire is the only writer who has spoken

contemptuously of the *Memoirs of Dangeau.* The cause of this contempt will be found in the memoirs themselves; in the years 1719 and 1720, (these memoirs were continued after the death of Louis XIV,) it will be seen that the Marquis of Dangeau blames the *follies and the satirical Essays of young Arouet.* M. de Voltaire, as every body knows, never engaged in extensive reading, for which, in fact, he had not time. He may have very superficially gone over a few volumes of this work; he may have tried to find out the passages where the author spoke of himself; these articles, in which the cold and laconic censure of Voltaire is not softened by any praises may have wounded his pride; and this being the case, according to his usual custom, he has pronounced the work to be detestable.

"It was very likely that Madame de Maintenon should patronize this journal; in no other writings is Louis XIV. represented in a way at once so touching and so noble; you see in this journal, that the charm of his manners and his language sprung from his goodness of heart. Grace in princes is not a trifling affair; among private individuals such excess of politeness springs of course from a wish to please; but in sovereigns it is at once a proof of an amiable disposition, of kindness of heart, and of their esteem; and

by a happy coincidence, it honours as much as it charms. Louis XIV. never granted a favour without adding a compliment, which doubled its value: this compliment was for ever repeated in the family where it became a glorious tradition; almost always even his refusals were couched in language so gentle and so delicate, that they were received with gratitude. What could the best policy do more? But policy gives only a false affability which seduces nobody; there is a language which art can never know—the language which speaks to the heart. Doubtless Lonis XIV. had his defects; what man is without them? He may be charged with some errors; he did not sufficiently check the rage for high play at court and among individuals—or at least, he bethought himself too late of his duties on this head. Sometimes his magnificence degenerated into prodigality: he gave too many diamonds and jewels to the persons of his court; but even his faults had a character of nobleness and elevation; his tenderness, which he carried too far towards his natural children, never affected his regard to his legitimate children; to all of them he was the best and most tender of fathers. While on this subject, I must remark, that it is a strange contradiction both in morals and religion, that the fault of a parent should stamp upon an infant (the fruit of adul-

tery) an ineffaceable stain, while in a sovereign, a person who should set an example to all, this very crime, publicly acknowledged, gives to the child, the object of the scandal, a higher title of honour and a greater rank in society. It is easy to conceive why this remark has never been made. It is to be regarded as a real public misfortune, that any moral truth should necessarily be concealed; and it is a great ground for public rejoicing, and a prodigy in our age, that a court should exist sufficiently pure to allow a writer publicly to blame without danger, whatever religion and reason condemn.

"Louis XIV. has been reproached with defects he never had; with pride, excessive arrogance vanity, and a low envy of the reputation of Henry IV. The last imputation is formally disproved in the memoirs of the Count d'Estrade,* French ambassador to England; there is in his memoirs an admirable letter by Louis XIV. which contains the most splendid eulogy of Henry IV. and in which by a modest yet noble exaggeration, Louis acknowledges that he owes to Henry IV. *all that his crown and France possess of greatness*

* The Memoirs of the Count d'Estrade have often been printed under the title of *Negociatons*—the last time at London in seventeen volumes 12mo. The complete collection forms twenty-two volumes folio.—(*Note by the Editor.*)

*and glory.** Louis XIV. had in public an air of imposing majesty, but which was always tempered by grace and mildness; never was sovereign more amiable in the bosom of his family or among his more intimate acquaintance. His old age had nothing about it either of sadness or austerity, and his kindness never changed towards his children, the princes of the blood, the persons whom he honoured with his friendship, or his domestics. No king was ever more truly paternal than Louis XIV. He was so easy of access, that even persons who were not in the habit of going to court readily obtained private audiences, of which the only subject was family interests; he was daily occupied with reuniting divided relations, and on particular occasions he only spoke and acted as an arbiter and mediator, never with the authority of a sovereign. In short, no French monarch ever was fonder of labour, nor occupied himself with matters of business more assiduously, steadily, or boldly; for his sufferings and disease never led him to neglect his more important

* I am proud of being the first writer who has quoted this letter as a complete vindication of Louis XIV. I spoke of it for the first time in the notes to the *Duchess of La Vallière* and *Madame de Maintenon.*—(*Note by the Author.*)

duties. He even attended to business on his death-bed, and on the day on which he received extreme unction.

"Such was Louis XIV. in the Memoirs of Dangeau, which have the merit of representing this prince in all his greatness and goodness, by merely stating facts. The author wrote to Madame de Maintenon, after the death of Louis XIV., that *if he had thought such fine eyes would have read his memoirs, they would not have been so negligently written*. In fact, he wrote rapidly and carelessly, and made no other pretension than that of being scrupulously exact."

It is now several years since I mentioned for the first time this Journal (in the *Souvenirs de Félicie.*) Let me be allowed to quote here the opinion which I then gave of them, which reflection has since perfectly confirmed.

"The *Journal of Dangeau* is a work perfectly unique for its simplicity, its accuracy, its good faith, its impartiality, the spirit of fairness and moderation, and the excellent sentiments it displays throughout; the language is always that of an honest man. . . . . Never man had less vanity; his own name occupies but a small space in this prodigious number of volumes. He never speaks of himself but when he alludes to the favour he

has received from his sovereign; there is no ostentation, no desire of shining, or of inspiring the reader with a high idea of his character or talents —no animosity against any one existing. Let these memoirs be compared with any others, and it will be discovered that they form the most extraordinary of historical monuments, and that the work is, in its way, the most estimable which exists.*

"We are not very solicitous about discovering whether the author of a work of imagination is virtuous or not, but it is necessary that we should so esteem a historian, because in order to be interested in his work, we must believe him to be accurate and impartial. We must still more esteem a person who writes the memoirs of his own time, because it is not enough that he is frank and open. If he has vanity, envy, hatred—or if he is vindictive, it is impossible for him to be perfectly sincere, even if he wishes to be so; his passions will blind him, his vanity will at all events lead him to make a frivolous or absurd use of his

* It must be always recollected that Louis XIV. never knew of the existence of these memoirs, and that Madame de Maintenon never read them till after the death of that monarch, and consequently when she was entirely out of favour.—*(Note by the Author.)*

talents; he will speak too much of himself, and will not speak the truth. The *Memoirs of Cardinal du Retz* are the cleverest known: their style is lively and natural; the author's manner of narrating is piquant and admirable; he observes things sagaciously, and paints with genius; but his book is the work of a factious and ambitious man, and of *un homme à bonnes fortunes;* you read him with mistrust and without advantage, and you never can cite him as an authority.* It is to be desired that a historian should have a superior understanding; he ought to be able to trace the causes of events, to discern them, to display them, and to draw great results from them; that is to say, he should demonstrate by facts the security of good measures, and the danger of bad ones; in short, he should unfold, both to princes and people, a fine treatise on *experimental morality*. If history does not do this, the reading of a well-written romance is far more improving. Historical memoirs are only materials for history. An author of historical memoirs will rarely be of the latter description, (even supposing him to be sincere, virtuous, and modest,) if he has a great deal of imagination, and the talent of writing well.

* He is often revoltingly unjust, especially towards Queen Anne of Austria.

He will combine strange unions of events, and striking contrasts; he will try to draw portraits, and to make reflections; he will neglect small details; he will endeavour to find out a connexion between his portraits and the actions of the persons whom he describes; of course, in spite of himself, by an irresistible impulse, he will fall into framing systems, disguises, and falsehoods, by dissimulating any action which would contradict his ideas, and by suppressing or distorting facts, in order not to lose an ingenious reflection or a striking result. I know that historians themselves are far from being exempt from reproach on this head; but if all memoirs were written like those of Dangeau, they would remove from historians all possibility of embellishing or falsifying events.* If these memoirs had been printed eighty years ago, would M. de Voltaire and his copyists have been able to say, and to repeat, that Louis XIV. was full of haughtiness and pride—that his devotion rendered his court melancholy and austere †

* We can only style *those* memoirs *historical* which follow without interruption the thread of political events, and which give an account of the conduct of those persons who have played a part in public affairs; consequently these memoirs are *not* historical.

† There was music performed daily at Madame de Maintenon's,

—that it was Madame de Maintenon who tormented him during the last days of his life, to aggrandize the Duke du Maine; when it is plain, from these memoirs, that the cause of all this was merely the excessive affection which the monarch felt for his natural children?

"The stormy time which has just gone by, will produce an innumerable quantity of detestable memoirs, which will appear from the present time to the conclusion of the next fifty years. How will any one be able, from such materials, to write a good history of the revolution? What author will be able to arrange the chaos of discordant facts, of contradictions, of falsehoods, and of calumnies?"

* * * * * * * *

[The memoirs written during the minority of Louis XIV. were written in the time of factions; yet in general we find in them a spirit of justice and impartiality, especially in the excellent Memoirs of Madame de Nemours, of Madame de Motteville, and of Tourville. But at that time there was an elevation in the minds of men which preserved them always from falsehood. The various parties at bottom had the same principles—

and frequently comedies were acted. Masquerades, balls, lotteries, and amusements of every kind, took place constantly at court till the death of Louis XIV.

none wished to overthrow *the throne or the altar*. Modern philosophy had as yet no proselytes.]

"As the author of the memoirs is as interesting as his work, it will no doubt be agreeable to the reader to be introduced to him. 'He possessed,' says Fontenelle, 'a very amiable physiognomy, a great deal of natural talent, and even wrote verses very agreeably.'

"The Marquis de Dangeau belonged to a protestant family; but in his early youth he had been converted to the catholic faith. He was greatly distinguished for his valour and his military talents.*

"One day when M. de Dangeau was about to join the king's card party, he solicited apartments in the château of Saint Germain, where the court was. This favour it was not easy to obtain, because there was but little room. The king replied that he would grant the request, provided he would make it in a hundred verses, to be composed during play; but one hundred verses exactly, neither more nor less: after the game was ended, (in which he had joined, apparently as heartily as usual,) he repeated the hundred verses: he had composed and counted them exactly, and fixed

* Philip de Courcillon, Marquis of Dangeau, was born in La Beauce, on the 21st September, 1638.

them in his memory; and these three efforts had not been at all troubled by the rapid progress of the game."

[The king did not require these verses to be fine, and as the talent for improvisating bad verses is very common, it is possible that the Marquis of Dangeau may have improvisated them after the game, instead of composing them while playing, which would be much less surprising.]

"The Marquis of Dangeau had the honour to be at court the patron of Boileau, who addressed to him his fifth satire *on Nobility*. The Abbé de Dangeau, brother of the marquis, who had become, through the credit of his brother, reader to the king, took occasion from his place to benefit literature and authors.

"He was intrusted by Louis XIV. with several negociations; he went as envoy extraordinary to the Electors of the Rhine, and he concluded the marriage between the Duke of York (afterwards James II.) with the Princess of Modena. Without any intrigues, he obtained through the sagacity of his character, his good behaviour, and the esteem of his sovereign, all the dignities of the court. He joined the virtue of beneficence to his zeal and activity; he employed the revenues and the rights derived from the situation of Grand

Master, in educating in common, in a large establishment for that purpose, twelve young gentlemen of the best families in the kingdom, and chiefly destined afterwards to serve in the army. Thus he had the honour (a fact not generally known) of having been the first founder of a military school in France, or, at all events, to have suggested the first idea of such an establishment. There were some pupils of inferior birth admitted into that of Dangeau; Duclos says that he was educated there. This fine establishment only lasted ten years; after the death of its founder, the bad condition of the finances did not allow the government to keep it up.

"His duties at court, in business, and his own useful private occupations, did not prevent Dangeau from cultivating literature and the sciences. He replaced Scuderi as a member of the academy. It happened that two brothers succeeded in that body, to two ridiculous persons; the Abbé de Dangeau replaced the Abbé Cottin, who had been so ridiculed by Boileau, that his successor, obliged by custom to praise his predecessor, durst not venture to print his discourse. Every Wednesday the Marquis and the Abbé de Dangeau had a party selected from the men of letters and science of the time. At these parties met the Cardinal de

Polignac,* the Abbé de Longuerue, the Abbé Dubois, the Marquis de l'Hôpital, the Abbé de Saint Pierre, the Abbé Raguenet, Mairan, and the Abbé de Choisy; the latter so celebrated for his wit, his adventures, and his writings, (particularly the *Journal of Travels to Siam,* and his *Memoirs,*) was converted to religion by the Abbé de Dangeau, and consecrated himself thenceforth to its service with equal sincerity and zeal."

I shall here give some account of the personages I have last mentioned.

The Abbé Longuerue was a prodigy in point of intelligence and memory from the age of four. At fourteen, he knew almost all the languages. He made a particular study of history and more especially of chronology. Having well employed his time at an early age, and never having lost any thing he had learned, he succeeded in doubling a useful life, and his knowledge became prodigious. He has left behind him several works, among others, a *Historical Description of France.*

The Abbé du Bos was a celebrated man of letters. The regent, who did not imagine that persons who wrote well, are good for nothing but to make books, employed him usefully in several negotiations. The Abbé du Bos discover-

* Author of the Anti-Lucretius.

ed great talents as a diplomatist, and rendered considerable service to the regent. He died at Paris in 1742; he was perpetual secretary to the French Academy. He has left several esteemed works; the most famous is that entitled *Critical Reflections on Poetry and Painting*.

The Marquis de l'Hôpital, one of the greatest mathematicians of his time, served for some time in quality of captain of horse. The weakness of his sight compelled him to quit the service, and then he gave up his whole time to study and the sciences. He was received a member of the Academy of Sciences in 1693. His work entitled *De l'Analyse des Infiniment Petits*, (4to. 1696,) procured him a high reputation among scientific men; in society, he had that of a man of honour and of pleasing manners. He married Charlotte de la Chesnelaye, who partook, not only of his tastes, but shared his studies. He developed her genius for mathematics, and she aided him in his labours of that kind. The Marquis de l'Hôpital died in 1704, aged forty-three.

The Abbé de Saint Pierre obtained, in the reign of Louis XIV., through the credit of his protector, several benefices, the place of almoner to Madame, and the rich abbey of Sainte-Trinité de Tiron. The Cardinal de Polignac, one of his most active

of his protectors, contributed principally to procure him these favours, and to get him received a member of the French Academy, though the Abbé de Saint Pierre had no right to he admitted of that body. After the death of Louis XIV. he wrote a pamphlet full of flatteries of the regent, and very injurious to the memory of Louis XIV. his benefactor, and that of the French Academy. This occasioned his expulsion from that body, by the unanimous voice of the members, with the exception of Fontenelle, who refused to vote for his exclusion. Fontenelle thought very little of inconsistencies of whatever kind they might be. It is well known that in the latter part of the reign of Louis the Great, he published several discourses full of the the most edifying piety, and that after the decease of that monarch he wrote the *History of the Oracles!* . . . The Abbé de Saint Pierre has been outrageously praised by the philosophers of the eighteenth century; the reason is plain; in his writings, he declaimed against the celibacy of priests, against Louis XIV. and against the government; and he has said many things indirectly and sometimes directly, against religion. He was a bad priest, a bad writer, and an inventor of chimerical projects. It has been said of him that he displayed very little talent in company—so that

he could have had none at all, for he shows none in his writings. The modern philosophers agree that his morals were not pure, but they assert he was very charitable; he has been highly praised for having taken for his device the words *give and forgive*. It is highly ridiculous to boast of his charity, which was not the charity of the gospel, but *beneficence;* it is alleged that he invented this word, which is more harmonious—more elegant; worldly people prefer the one, the poor the other.

The Abbé Raguenet devoted himself to the study of belles letters and history. *His discourse on the Merits and Dignity of Martyrdom* gained the prize for eloquence at the French Academy in 1689. A hundred years afterwards, the finest discourse on the same subject would only have been a ground of exclusion from all literary honours. The Abbé Raguenet has left behind him several esteemed works, among others the *Description of the Monuments of Rome*, which procured him patent letters as a *Roman Citizen*—a title which he bore till the time of his death.

Jean Jacques Mairan, was born at Béziers in 1678, and died at Paris in 1771, at the age of ninety-three; in many respects he singularly resembled Fontenelle; he pursued, like him, a long literary career, and with the same talents, at least

for his sciences, he filled the same places. He was at once a scientific and literary man, a member of the Academy of Sciences, and of the French Academy. Like Fontenelle, he has written *Eloges*, which are esteemed; like him he had a quiet disposition, full of candour and amenity, and was generally liked, both in the academy of which he was a member, and in society; at length he succeeded Fontenelle in 1741, as perpetual secretary to the French Academy. He has left several good works on physics and eulogies of the academicians who died in 1741-2-3. An expression of his has been cited, which is quite charming, because it could only have come from the heart. He said that *an honest man is one whose blood is warmed by the recital of a good action.*

The Abbé de Choisi was very licentious in his youth; he had a handsome face, and it is quite true that he lived in the country eighteen months in a woman's dress—a folly which forms the subject of his romance of the *Countess des Barres*, which he wrote at this period. M. de Voltaire says, that during this time he wrote his *Ecclesiastical History*, which is false and absurd. The Abbé de Choisi published the first volume of that work (corrected by Bossuet) in 1703; he was then near sixty; but a gross falsehood cost nothing to

M. de Voltaire, when his object was to cast ridicule on any religious work. It is a fortunate and proud thing for religion that a man of such talents as M. de Voltaire, could injure it by no other means than by cabals, falsehoods, and calumnies.

M. Ameilhon, who was naturally of a very odd and violent disposition, was enraged at losing this manuscript,* one of the ornaments of the library where he was director. The aversion which he had already conceived for me was thus greatly augmented. The following are the grounds of his enmity; he had always had a wish to join to the library the handsome rooms which I occupied, so that he witnessed my establishment there with great displeasure; my apartments had a pretty little garden under the windows of the drawing room; upon this M. Ameilhon seized—a thing which was the more absurd, as he had another much larger belonging to his lodgings, which were the handomest at the Arsenal. In order to have quietness, I only gently complained of this usurpation, but seeing that he insisted pertinaciously, I yielded without resistance. We lived together tolerably, and he came to visit me from time to time; but the loss of Dangeau's manuscripts gave fuel to his fury, and when he came, he

* The Memoirs of Dangeau.

behaved in the most violent manner. I replied to him calmly, and detailed my reasons; but nothing could soften him; and from that time he was my irreconcileable enemy. I shall not recapitulate here all the vexations which he made me undergo; I shall only cite a few of them. He distinctly refused to lend me any books from the library. I wrote on this subject to the minister, who gave him positive orders to lend me all the books I asked for; he had then no other resource but that of making me wait for whole weeks. I suffered all this with a patience which never failed me. I played him a little trick which put the finishing stroke to his fury; nevertheless, he turned it to his own use. He had very little talent, and was a very bad writer; he was publishing a continuation of the *History of the Lower Empire*; at the same time, I had some work or another in the press. There was a mistake about the proofs; the printer sent me that of Ameilhon, which I read and corrected from beginning to end —I do not mean the mistakes of the printer, but the bad French of the author; I corrected in this way at least a dozen of phrases. I showed the sheet to two or three persons who called to see me while I was making the corrections; they laughed heartily at them. The thing was told;

M. Ameilhon was in a dreadful passion, yet he caused the proof to be printed as I had corrected it.

In the mean time, M. Ameilhon was named a member of the Institute. One day he formed part of a deputation and presented himself to the emperor for the first time, with the ardent hope of being remarked by him and obtaining the honour of a few words *en passant*; he placed himself in a conspicuous station in the audience chamber; the emperor at last seeing a face which he only imperfectly recollected, went up to him and said, "Are you not M. Ancillon?"—"Yes, Sire . . . Ameilhon."—"Ah! true, librarian of Saint Geneviève?"—"Yes, Sire . . . of the Arsenal."—"Oh yes—the continuator of the *History of the Ottoman Empire.*"—"Yes, Sire, of the History of the Lower Empire." At these words, the emperor, annoyed at his own mistakes, turned his back upon him roughly; and M. Ameilhon feeling nothing but the *honour and joy* of being for a few minutes near the emperor, and the object of his attention, said emphatically to his next neighbour, "*The Emperor is a wonderful man—he knows every thing.*" This story was told me the same day by one of my friends, M. Destournel, who was present.

In the very beginning of my residence at the

Arsenal, I renewed the request I had before made in Germany to have my grandson with me; he was fourteen, and charming at once in face, disposition, and turn of mind. I might have kept him there with me two years; but my request was refused; which occasioned me as much grief as I had formerly experienced at Brevel, when I urgently requested he might be sent to me at Hamburg, whither I should have gone to fetch him. He was then ten years old; he could have quitted France and remained in a foreign country three or four years without being subject to the revolutionary laws. I was refused on my return a satisfaction which would have been so useful to the boy's education. I had also asked my brother at Hamburg, to send me my niece Georgette, then six years old, and I experienced a similar refusal.

I found in France some friends and many ungrateful acquaintances; but Madame d'Harville, who was high in favour at the new court, where her husband had a grand situation, proved to me that absence and the vicissitudes of fortune can never alter true friendship. I also saw again M. de Cabre, and the worthy Monsigny; the latter told me he would be happy if he had two thousand francs more. I wrote to the emperor

the same evening to ask them, and the day following Monsigny received an order for a pension of two thousand francs. M. de Cabre, who wrote charming familiar verses, had formerly written many for me, and that I might experience no change whatever in him, he wrote some once more. The following are some of the last which he wrote for one of my birthdays:

Jadis je n'osois vous chanter,
Mon adorable Félicie,
J'aurois eu trop à vous conter,
Et ma lyre eût paru hardie.
Pour vous peindre mes sentimens,
Quelle assez pure allégorie!
Puisque la langue des amans
De votre cœur étoit bannie.

Aujourd'hui je me sens plus fier,
Mon amour n'est plus à la gêne;
Mieux que les messieurs du bel air,
Il se vante de sa trentaine.
Frivoles vainqueurs de vingt ans,
Dont l'ardeur chaque jour s'épuise!
Vous vous croyez les vrais amans....
Amour rit de votre méprise.

Ses secrets, ses dons les plus doux,
Il les réserve pour notre âge;
Quand ses feux follets sont pour vous,
Son feu pur est notre partage.

Par eux de l'imprudent Titon
Il accélère la vieillesse ;
Mais il rajeunit Philémon
Avec sa flamme enchanteresse.

Vous n'obtiendrez pas la faveur
De cette jeunesse dernière,
Vous qu'un banal et faux bonheur
Rent prodigues de la première.
Ces transports, ces plaisirs si fous,
Comme vous tout set les réclame :
On n'est jeune, heureuz comme nous,
Qu'avec l'esprit, le cœur et l'âme.

Que de raison dans ses discours !
Dans sa personne que de grâce !
On voudroit l'entendre toujours,
Et sans cesse suivre ses traces ;
Dès qu'on la voit, on veut l'aimer,
On veut penser comme elle pense :
Oui, pour plaire, instruire, charmer,
Le ciel lui donna la naissance.

Ah ! si pour louer son esprit
Ma voix eût été plus sonore,
Déjà combien j'en aurois dit !
Et combien j'en dirois encore !
Vanter son talent, ses écrits,
N'est pas un droit que je m'arroge :
Mais tous ceux qui lisent Genlis
Mieux que moi feront son éloge.

Pour la scène bien des auteurs
Ont su puiser dans ses ouvrages,

Et par elle ses emprunteurs
Du public ont eu les suffrages.
Plusieurs s'en souviennent tout bas,
Plusieurs en perdent la mémoire;
Quelques-uns ne s'en vantent pas;
Mais quelques-autres en font gloire.

The following are some other couplets written by M. Radet:

Ce jour où tout doit s'empresser
A vous rendre un sincère hommage,
De Villemonble, sans balancer,
Nous entreprenons le voyage;
A vous fêter, en arrivant,
Chacun de nous gaiment s'apprête;
Et voilà qu'en vous retrouvant,
De chacun de nous c'est la fête.

Ils nous ont laissé pour toujours
Une aimable réminiscence,
Ces instans si doux et si courts
Qu'embellissoit votre présence.
En y songeant avec plaisir,
On les sent, on les apprécie;
Eh! qui pourroit ne pas chérir
Les souvenirs de Félicie!

Nous y trouvons un esprit fin,
Un style que chacun admire,
Un tact heureux, un goût divin
Qui nous enchante et nous attire.

De vous voir a-t-on le bonheur,
Vous captivez tous les suffrages ;
On sent qu'il faut aimer l'auteur
Autant qu'on aime ses ouvrages.

Avant ce roman si touchant,
Dont l'héroïne a tout pour plaire,
On disoit d'elle en la citant :
La tendre et froide La Vallière.
Vous la peignez, un feu subit
Dans son âme naît et s'allume :
Elle s'arme de votre esprit,
Et s'embellit sous votre plume.

La Vallière fut pour Louis
Une amante triste et plaintive ;
Mais, sous le pinceau de Genlis,
Elle séduit, charme et captive.
Ah ! si des couleurs du portrait
On eût vu briller le modèle,
Fixé par ce puissant attrait,
Louis seroit resté fidèle.

Nous savons tous que vos écrits
Trop souvent excitent l'envie :
Mais des bons cœurs, des bons esprits
Genlis sera toujours chérie :
Ses livres, comme ses discours,
Tout en elle plaît, intéresse :
Ne pouvant l'entendre toujours,
On voudroit la lire sans cesse.

M. Radet brought on the Vaudeville stage a great quantity of my novels; he wrote in company with Messrs. Desfontaines and Barré. I asked the emperor for a pension of four thousand francs for M. Radet; when the emperor granted it, he was told, that M. Radet wrote along with two other men of letters; upon this the emperor said, "*Very well---that will make twelve thousand francs.*" Two years afterwards, I solicited for my brother the place of librarian at the Arsenal, vacant by the death of M. Saugrin; this place was immediately next to that of director, and was worth three thousand francs. The emperor instantly gave my brother a pension of three thousand francs, without any obligation to do duty, and gave the place of librarian to M. de Treneuil.

I passed each summer in the country; I went several times to dine at Villemonble, where M. Radet had a pretty house, where there was always to be found excellent company, selected from the most amiable and clever persons of his acquaintance. I met at this place, with great pleasure, Madame Kenens, Messieurs Barré, Desfontaines, and Moreau, &c. The latter has a particular gracefulness in his talent, which is never insipid, because he joins to it a mild gaiety, which agreeably contrasts with a serious and somewhat me-

lancholy physiognomy; he partook at this period the successes (at the Vaudeville) of Messieurs Radet, Barré, and Desfontaines. He wrote charming verses, which he sung very agreeably.

While I am on the subject of men of letters, I beg to be allowed to boast of a prediction, which I made at that time in the *Mercure*, and which has since been amply verified. A very young literary man, (M. Charles Nodier,) had just then published a romance, called *The Proscripts.* I reviewed it in the *Mercury*, and terminated the article by saying, that there were in the work several pages which did more honour to the writer, than certain books which still enjoy a reputation; and I added, that with study, M. Nodier would certainly reach a very high rank in literature. In fact, there was in this first attempt, every thing which could give promise of future excellence---there was soul, a talent for observation and description, there was imagination---in short, all that composes genius. I was far from thinking, that with so mild a physiognomy, and an air so timid, he would have had the courage, a few years afterwards, to attack the formidable power of Napoleon, and to brave all the rigours of a long captivity.

My works, which procured me real friends in

foreign lands, obtained me some also in France, whom I shall cherish till death---Mesdames de Choiseul, (then de Beaufremont,) de Lascours, and de Brady. I had seen Madame de Choiseul in her infancy, at Belle-Chasse; our acquaintance was renewed, and ripened into the tenderest friendship. Madame de Lascours expressed a wish to see me immediately on my arrival. She was very young, charming in all respects, and already announced, by the maturity of her judgment and talents, the admirable sentiments and conduct which she has always displayed. Madame de Brady, who was also very young, and of radiant beauty, wrote me anonymous letters during a whole year, giving me a pretended name and address, to which I was to send my answers. Her letters announced so much talent, that they interested me strongly. I entreated her in my replies to cultivate her talents, which have now become so superior, and to which virtue the most pure and irreproachable has given additional power. Another person also who was extremely interesting, wrote to me during eighteen months, charming anonymous letters, under the name of *Jeanneton;* this was the Duchess of Chevreuse, (formerly Narbonne,) daughter-in-law of the Duchess of Luynes, who amused herself with making a little novel

out of our connexion. Our first conversation was on the two sides of a wall, and at our first interview, she came to the Arsenal disguised as a gardener's daughter; she filled my room with flowers. I pretended to take her for a peasant, which delighted her. She fancied herself completely disguised, because she had a peasant's petticoat, and said *j'allions* and *je venions*. Her small white hands, the elegance of her air, the sweetness of her voice and of her accent, formed a pleasant contrast with the rusticity of her dress and language; she seemed to me like a pretty actress destined to play princesses, and playing by chance, and consequently without illusion, the part of a village girl. When afterwards she was exiled, I never ceased to solicit the emperor in her favour, but always in vain: there was somewhat of littleness in such rancour borne by a sovereign towards a young person so interesting in all respects, and whose only crime was to have shown courageously a just indignation relative to the affairs of Spain.

Young Anatole Montesquieu also wished to become acquainted with me—an object which he could readily have accomplished, seeing there were bonds of relationship between his family and that of M. de Genlis, but he was scarcely seventeen, and he preferred forming our acquaint-

ance in a romantic manner; so he went to Maradan, begging him to send him to me as a printer's boy, who was bringing me proofs. Maradan refused this; upon which he had recourse to Madame de Lascours, who simply invited me to meet him. I found in him so much talent and grace, and sentiments so noble, that I became truly attached to him. Our friendship has withstood the shock of two or three revolutions, and consequently is as solid as it is tender. At the period of his marriage with his cousin, whom he had loved from infancy, he begged me to paint an arabesque in his album; the arabesque represented his name, and that of the charming young person whom he was about to marry. I painted in the arabesque two lighted torches, with their flames united, and below the emblem I wrote the following verses:

Non, cette flamme vive et pure
N'est point la fugitive ardeur
De cet amour léger, enfant de l'imposture,
Qui promet in vain le bonheur!
J'ai voulu peindre ici l'amour sans inconstance,
Sans traits piquans, sans ailes, sans bandeau,
Né dans le sein de l'aimable innocence,
Tendre et touchant, dès le berceau.
Ah! cette pinture si belle,

Si digne d'un meilleur peinceau,
Devroit sans doute être immortelle!
Que j'aime à la tracer dans ce doux souvenir :
Heureux qui peut toujours contempler son modèle,
Mais plus heureux qui peut l'offrir!

I have written other verses for him; and on his side he has written many for me. I encouraged with great pleasure the rising taste for literature and the arts, which he has since so successfully cultivated. He felt a great deal of friendship for Casimir, who returned his advances with his usual frankness, and who presented him, as the pledge of a real attachment, with two of my original manuscripts, which had been printed, but which were written entirely in my hand. According to my habit, I had sent copies of them only to the printer. Casimir put a high value upon these originals, and begged me to give him them, which I did. Afterwards he gave to my grandson, Anatole de Lawoestine, one of these manuscripts; these gifts were to him real sacrifices.

There happened to me at this time an adventure which touched me deeply: a young girl of eighteen, daughter of an ex-captain of horse, wrote me letters truly impassioned, and so frank, that I replied to them regularly; and the more exactly, as she told me she was dying of a consumption, which,

according to the physicians, must prove mortal. This correspondence lasted six months, at the end of which time she told me, that in order to see me before she died, she had seized the opportunity afforded her by one of her sisters, who had left Beauvais, and was coming by a post-chaise to Paris. In fact, she arrived one day at noon, at the Arsenal. Though she was in reality dying, her face was one of the most charming I have ever seen: she threw herself into my arms, weeping, and only spoke two or three words to me. She passed the whole day with me, and the only nourishment she took was a plain bouillon. She remained altogether silent, her eyes fixed on me, holding my hand, which she pressed and kissed from time to time, and occasionally bursting into quiet tears. Her sister sent for her at eight in the evening; she then knelt down before me, and asked my blessing: I took her in my arms, where I thought she would have expired. At length, bathed in tears, she quitted me, and left me in a state of the most disagreeable description. She returned to Beauvais, and died the morning after her arrival. Her father wrote to me to announce the melancholy tidings; she had directed him on her death bed to offer me her last adieu, and to tell me that she had given her youngest sister what she regarded as the most

precious of her possessions—a lock of my hair given her by myself. I cannot express the extent of my regret: that soul could not be a common one which could cherish so impassioned and so pure a love.

I experienced a vexation of another kind: I was at length absolutely compelled to separate from Helmina. This young person joined to the most amiable and the mildest disposition, and to a great deal of wit and talent such absurd notions, and such extravagant conduct, that no nature however indulgent, could support it. A few months after, Madame Récamier took her into her house, and the same reasons forced her to a similar rupture. Stéphanie Alyon, my god-daughter, who had been two years with me, remained; Casimir, though still a child, gave her a pretty taste for the harp: I taught her orthography, English, and the elements of history: she readily replied to my attentions. She has since translated from the English in an agreeable manner, a volume, forming part of a work called *The Little Naturalist*. She remained with me up to the time of her marriage, when she espoused a military man called M. Savary: she is now a virtuous and amiable wife.

A short time after my quarrel with Helmina, I received some letters from a lady in the country, which represented her to be in a most deplorable

situation. Her letters were clever and well written, and interested me strongly, for such letters have a particular influence on my feelings. I became passionately attached to this unfortunate person, who was fifty leagues off; I paid her expenses, and invited her to come and live with me. I expected her with incredible impatience: I knew she was fifty, but as in my letters I had requested to be informed of all particulars relative to her person, she had furnished me with a description of her face, in which she represented herself as noble, handsome, and interesting. I figured her the heroine of some old romance, who had preserved all that could recal to the mind touching recollections. At length she came, and I beheld a tall, starched, pale, and affected old woman, who could never have been handsome; and who treated me with a sentimental scene, the most comical and ridiculous that can be imagined. She fulfilled my expectation so slenderly, that at first I imagined she could not be the writer of the letters which had so much charmed me; but I very soon discovered in spite of her disagreeable manners, her pretensions in all respects, and her bad taste, that she was really clever; that she could spell well, and that she had even studied grammar. I then read her letters which I had carefully preserved, and found

...GLIA CERFOGLI'S BA...

that my prejudices in favour of the writer, and my imagination had excessively embellished them; nevertheless, they displayed talent, but by no means equal to my first opinion of them. Madame ***** became daily more insupportable to me, from her pedantry, her affectation, her awkward manners, and the inconceivable absurdity of her coquetry. One day, she came into my room, looked at herself in a glass over the chimney, and said with an air of satisfaction—*Well, I have still my skin!** She meant to say that she had still a fine skin, which was not at all the case, for she had a dead white complexion, quite covered with freckles. "Oh, Madam," said I, "there is nothing astonishing in that; for though Time renders us ugly, he does not flay us." Madame ***** whom nothing could disconcert, smiled at my simplicity, and entered into a long dissertation to prove, that *I have a skin, I have colour; she has a skin*, or *she has colour*, are expressions quite in common use. This amiable companion remained with me more than a year; at the end of which time her passion for M. Alyon, the ugliest man I ever knew, and who was also fifty—her passion, I say, which was shared, broke out with such fury,

* In the original, *J'ai encore de la peau.*

that I was forced to testify my surprise at it, and to watch the motions of these two young lovers, who between them, made up more than a century. Nothing, however, could restrain them: M. Alyon, one fine morning, carried off his conquest, by which means, to my great joy, I got rid of her.

My literary labours did not prevent me from giving some attention to the education of Casimir; he had a petulance, a natural temerity of courage which gave me great uneasiness, and which those who did not like him construed into a love of mischief, an imputation most calumnious, for he has always displayed the most generous feelings, and the tenderest heart: to be sure, he has frequently walked on the roof of the Arsenal, and what was still more alarming, on the stones outside the building: and after taking two lessons in swimming, he crossed the river by himself. At sixteen, in order to learn the art of riding, he made an excursion of thirty leagues going and as much returning, at a gallop. All these things were sufficiently alarming, but in his case they were allied to qualities most attaching; an excellent heart, an admirable taste for the arts, infinite wit, a great deal of piety, and the noblest sentiments: no one always gave alms with

more pleasure ; and it has chanced more than once, when I have given him money for charitable purposes, that he has given away part of his own clothes. The first sum at all considerable which he had in his own power was five hundred francs, (he was then fourteen years of age,) and he employed the whole in making me presents, without keeping a farthing of it to himself. He gained a considerable sum by his first concert at Paris ; but he reserved no share of the profits for his own use. He bought with the proceeds six arm chairs, a sofa, and new curtains for a drawing room, and made a most virtuous use of the remainder. The unexampled success of this concert induced M. Picard * to request that he would perform at the Salle Louvois eight days afterwards. To this Casimir consented, but he would only play gratuitously : M. Picard had not only the boxes, &c. quite full, but even the lobbies ; and Casimir's success was as brilliant on this occasion as on the former. At this time M. Pieyre wrote four lines on Casimir's talents, which might really be called impromptu, for he wrote them with a pencil while at the theatre. The following

* Author of the comedies played at the Odeon with so much applause.—*(Note by the Author.)*

is the charming quatrain which he addressed to me:

> "Au jeune Orphée, à son luth enchanteur
> Quand le public rend un si juste hommage,
> Vous ressemblez au Créateur
> Qui s'applaudit de son ouvrage.

These concerts of Casimir's cast completely into shade the talents of all the other harp players: I have never seen his talents equalled, and they can never be surpassed. He has completed the art of harp playing, and perfected harmonic sounds; and he even discovered another kind of sounds, which till then were unknown: besides the harmonic sound, he drew two others from the same cord, which formed a perfect unison: besides, the method he acquired from me of placing the hands, and forming gamuts, is quite different from that of other performers on the harp, who have a mode so different and defective, that it is impossible to attain perfection by means of it. Casimir, besides many inventions which it would take too much space to detail here, has proved that you may play with both little fingers; (I only used that of the right hand;) he has made the harp strings far thicker, and ten times more tight, which quadruples the intensity of the sound: he invented the plan of sitting on a seat much more elevated than

usual, which at once gives an easier air, more facility in playing, and prevents the shape from being injured. Never having played in public in France, since his performance at the age of seventeen, in these two concerts his method of course could not be generally promulgated. The professors of the harp in general, not being able to play in his style, perpetuated their own bad plan: however, two pupils to whom Casimir gave lessons through friendship, (and of whom the one is not a musical person,*) concur in proving how much ours is preferable. Alfred is a proof of the same thing in Belgium, and he is but eighteen:† he will hereafter complete the proof. Indeed, my engraved method, which had so much success and sale, has of itself made pupils, (without teachers,) preferable to all those made by professors of the instrument.

One day when I was walking on foot in the streets with Stephanie Alyon, and Casimir, (then fourteen) I stopped for a moment at a little shop on the ground near the kennel: suddenly I felt myself seized from behind and carried off; it was Casimir, who bore me with a strength extraordinary for his age, into the court-yard of a house

* Mademoiselle de Marcieu.

† Written in 1820.

of which the gate was open ; he saved my life, for I should have been crushed to death by a horse which had run away, and whose footsteps, with my accustomed absence of mind I had not heard. Stephanie had run off, but Casimir thought of nothing but me ; his courage and his excellent heart have never failed me. He did another thing which deserves recital. As he was returning to the Arsenal at nine in the evening, the wheel of a cart loaded with stones broke ; the man who was with the cart must have been crushed to pieces had not Casimir rushed towards him, supported the cart with one of his hands and his knee, and with the other withdrawn the man who had fallen on his knees, and who in attempting to support the cart with his shoulder, had broken the shoulder bone. Casimir, seeing that he was dangerously hurt, took him in his arms, and asked him where he lived : the man, who was a mason, replied, That he dwelt in the second court of the Arsenal ; it was in the summer, and was still day-light ; all this passed before our door and in front of the library : the porter and his family, as well as several passengers, ran to the spot, and wished to help in carrying the wounded man. Casimir would not suffer this, but carried him in his arms, followed by the crowd, up to the

fourth floor where he lived; when there, he sent for a surgeon, caused the mason to be bled, made the shoulder blade be set in his presence, holding him in his arms all the time of the operation, while he sent to me to ask for *eau de tilleul* and *fleur d'orange* for the sick man, who certainly tasted these things then for the first time in his life. Casimir remained till midnight, paid the surgeon, and went daily for the first eight days to visit and attend his patient. Three weeks afterward, when we were at our parish church of St. Paul, at high mass, we saw three men with bouquets, representing the corporation of masons, rendering the holy bread: at the end of the ceremony all the spectators saw them with surprise approach Casimir, and present him with a superb cake adorned with ribbons; it was a homage offered here by the corporation of masons, in consideration of his having saved the life of their comrade. We carried off to the Arsenal in triumph the fine cake, and no present ever gave Casimir more pleasure.

We read aloud history and theatrical pieces every evening, and I shall relate on this head an anecdote of Casimir, which in every respect deserves to be quoted. One evening, I was reading to him the story of Caunus, a philosopher, who

when condemned to death, played a game at chess very quietly with his friend before his execution, and won the game; this fact has been cited by all historians without exception, as a proof of great strength of mind; the same remark was made in the book where the anecdote was recounted: when I came to that part of it, Casimir interrupted me and said, "There is nothing surprising in that; the friend against whom the philosopher was playing must have been a monster, if he could preserve sufficient coolness to play even tolerably." I venture to say that this reflection is admirable, and the person who made it for the first time was not quite sixteen. I shall here quote an observation of another boy, (Alfred Le Maire,) whom I had adopted and educated at the same period, and of whom I shall have to speak in a more advanced part of these memoirs. The remark to which I allude is the more charming, as it adds a moral lesson, most touching and natural, to one of the most beautiful of La Fontaine's fables, of which the only defect was its want of one. It was the fable of the *Wolf and the Lamb;* when I read this fable to children, I always suppress the two miserable lines at the beginning:—

> La raison du plus fort est toujours la meillure;
> Nous l'allons montrer tout à l'heure.

When with this suppression, I read the fable for the first time to Alfred, (then eight years old,) he was deeply touched with the fate of the lamb, and said, " See what a sad thing it is to be separated from one's mother!" . . . Certainly if the same idea had suggested itself to La Fontaine, he would have expressed it, and his fable would have been perfect.

It was also during the same time that I published *La Tendresse Maternelle, ou L'Education sensitive.* I made a hazardous attempt in this work, and according to the acknowledgment of every one, succeeded in it. This undertaking was, to write a novel history of a female confined in a dungeon; and it was unanimously allowed that the history of Diana is infinitely more interesting than that of the Duchess of C——, which had acquired so much success in *Adèle et Théodore.* There is in this work a perfectly novel idea on education; namely, that of attaching a religious memorial or moral lessons to all the sensations which, in the end, might become most dangerous. By reflecting hereon, people will one day adopt this idea, which will be, for women particularly, of the greatest utility.

It was in following this idea, that I made long after, (in the year 1824,) for my great-grand-

daughter Pulchérie de Celle, my *Cantique des Fleurs,* with the sole intention at first of making it a preservative against all the insipid, corruptive compliments, which are addressed to young females in offering them lilies, roses, &c. and ultimately to render this piece of poetry more instructive, I conceived the idea of writing a botanical course, presenting such flowers only as were remarkable for their properties and different phenomena. In fact, I endeavoured to exhibit in every couplet of this *Cantique,* some striking moral, and to show at the same time in each thought a sublime and benign providence.

I wrote shortly after the *Siege of Rochelle,* which, of all my novels, is the one which had, and which still has, the greatest success: yet I have never written any work which has been so much abused by all the journalists, and particularly by M. de Feletz, who says, in his extract, that the innocent Clara is accused of an execrable crime, and looked on as a monster even by her lover himself, for no other cause than that she had been found fainting upon the table on which they had placed the body of the infant; whilst in the romance I have accumulated a multitude of questionable appearances as well as of positive facts, which leave no possibility of doubt that she had

not committed the crime; this, indeed, is a point on which all the reading public are universally agreed. M. de Feletz disliked me, because I had repelled the praises he had given me in the *Journal des Debats,* in a relation of my journey to Ferney to visit M. Voltaire, which is to be found in the first volume of the *Souvenirs.* He had made in those eulogiums, a critical comparison between my book and an account of the same journey by Madame Suard, and I never relished those praises which were bestowed on me at the expense of another. I was not acquainted with Madame Suard; her husband had always been my enemy; but I replied to M. de Feletz in a newspaper, in a manner very dry towards him, and complimentary towards Madame Suard, who by way of acknowledgment, wrote a year after, *Madame de Maintenon, drawn by herself,* an ill-written work, in which she has made use of all my researches and several of my reflections, without ever mentioning her obligations. At length, I produced anew my *Belisarius,* which had against it, as I had expected, all the philosophical *coterie.* M. de Villeterque, in the *Journal de Paris,* made the strangest critique on it, and which, contrary to his own intention, was discovered to be a grand eulogium; he said, that the commence-

ment of this work so dramatic, and at the same time so religious, would have been extremely beautiful, had Belisarius been a christian, but that, this not being the case, it was purely extravagant; thus M. Villeterque believed that Belisarius was a pagan. I had the moderation to abstain from making any kind of retort. This man had married a young female, who accepted him only for the sake of his literary talents; and I was told, if I persisted in publicly arresting this error, I should never have to despair; and I therefore sacrificed the *amour propre* of the author to good-nature. As to the rest, those literary men who spoke fairly, agreed in saying that Belisarius was one of my best works. Several men of letters have borrowed largely from it.

The *Belisarius* of Marmontel is certainly the most mediocre of all his performances. The best political arguments of his hero are to be found better expressed in Telemachus, and the dramatic part of this work is also out of character and keeping, as well as insipid and stupid. M. Marmontel announced at first that he meant to show a great man struggling with adversities, and after a very few pages, you perceive that he has no longer any adversities to struggle with. Belisarius, by being made too mild, becomes stupid; and as

I have remarked, that kind of poem is but a cold imitation of *Telemachus*, and destitute of any portion of imagination. Belisarius is *Mentor;* Justinian, *Idomeneus;* Tiberius, *Telemachus;* Eudoxa, *Antiope*. In the poem of Fénélon it is quite natural that Mentor should instruct Idomeneus, who was about to found a town; but it is absurd, when Belisarius, an old soldier, becomes suddenly a pedagogue, and speaks only of politics to an old king, with whom he has lived thirty years in great intimacy, and to whom he must have already said all these things; besides, it is quite incredible, that in all those conversations, so long and so numerous, Belisarius should not have recollected the sound of Justinian's voice. In fact, the manner of Belisarius is that of a shopkeeper in the Rue Saint Denis; he continually styles Justinian *neighbour*. The author, in attempting to give him an air of familiarity and good-nature, has rendered him paltry and ignoble. The character of Gelimer is destitute of all warmth of colouring, like all the others drawn in the book, the style of which purity, distinctness, nor elevation; the following are some of the phrases— "The soul which is a slave to cupidity, is constantly on sale to the highest bidder." "What resolution can outweigh the taste for pleasure, the

attractions of enjoyment, the desire of possessing the equivalent of all good?"—"The private individual annihilates himself to give up his entire soul to his prince."—"The monarch gets tired of the luxuries of his table, as soon as the man is satisfied."—"Let habit inspire a man with a feeling of the necessity of self-esteem;* let him accustom himself to cast his thoughts beyond the present, in order to collect the suffrages of the future." "Luxury is in a state, like low persons who have made great alliances; you pay respect to them from regard to their connexions, but you end by shutting them up.†"

The following stuff is quite unintelligible:—

"His wants render an opulent man a miser,‡ and his avarice is a mixture of all the passions, which is satisfied with gold; but if the most ardent of these passions, pride, ambition, or even love, (for it follows glory,) are no longer connected with objects of luxury, see how much it loses its attraction, and avarice its strength!—The truth which

* Instead of *habit*, a Christian would say *religion*, and an ancient philosopher would at least have said *virtue*.

† It is impossible to conceive how a man of talent could have written such things.

‡ He ought to have said *fancies*, for opulence consists in the possession of more than is sufficient for our wants.—(*Notes by the Author.*)

a prince ought to seek lies in an acquaintance with the things which interest humanity; to a sovereign truth is what is just and useful;* in society it is the circle of wants, the chain of duties, the mutual exchange of assistance, and the most equitable division of the public happiness among those who produce it."

All these things are complete enigmas; and it is easy to see from these samples, in what school our modern dogmatic authors have been formed, who are so obscure and so *tranchant*. This work owed all its success to its being on the plan of the conspiracy of the encyclopedists against religion and monarchy; accordingly, it was puffed and praised as a *chef-d'œuvre* by all the philosophers, who discovered the greatest enthusiasm for the most irreligious chapter in the work; M. de Voltaire wrote to Marmontel, that without this chapter, *the age would be in the dirt*. This was a very modest appreciation of his own writings, and showing great contempt for those of the philosophers; but M. de Marmontel believed in the sincerity of the eulogy; the philosophers laughed at it among themselves, and said nothing. It is in this book that, speaking of kings, the author says—"It is

* To a sovereign as to others, *truth* is what is true.—(*Note by the Author.*)

a misfortune that there should be men who can impose upon society the whole burden of their existence."

If society refused to bear the *burden of the existence of any man*, there would be neither judges, nor soldiers, nor chiefs, and consequently there could be no society.

"A sovereign ought to say, 'I engage to live only for my people.'"

What! is he not to be allowed also to live a little for his own family?

"Authority is founded on the will and the strength of a people. 'I have nothing of my own,' said Antoninus; 'My palace is not my own,' said Marcus Aurelius; and their imitators think as they did."

No, certainly; for these emperors and others named their successors or colleagues, and people do not dispose in this way of a thing which does not belong to them; it is absurd and ridiculous to quote as a positive fact a single obliging phrase, or a simple manner of speaking. Certainly when Marcus Aurelius said that his palace was not his, he would have thought it very strange if the people had come to demand the vacant apartments. The public had the privilege of walking in the magnificent gardens of the emperors, and this is

a privilege which is accorded by all the European sovereigns to their subjects and to foreigners; I do not know whether the pagan emperors gave rooms in their palaces to Virgil and Horace, but we know there have been many artists and literary men lodged at the Louvre. But all these phrases of Marmontel's were applauded as luminous, and new, and striking truths; yet he only repeated the declamations of the protestant Jurieu, so triumphantly refuted by Bossuet. Belisarius says—

"In the case of a sovereign, the wants of an isolated man may be reduced to little;* he may enjoy at an easy rate all the true happiness of life;† the circle of its pleasures is drawn round him, and beyond all is vanity, fantasy, and illusion.‡ If he is seized with the rage of property, he will become avaricious of *what he will call his property;* he will fancy he enriches himself at the expense of his people, and that he gains all he ravishes from them."

It follows from this, that all persons (and particularly kings) become robbers and oppressors as soon as they possess a property. All these errors

* Why should he have fewer wants than other men?

† As well as ourselves—no better.

‡ The Author ought to have told us what circle is prescribed to the monarch.

had been proscribed by the French clergy in 1682, they were renewed before *Belisarius* in the *Emilius* of Rousseau, and condemned on the 9th of June, 1762, as tending to give a false and odious character to the sovereign authority, and to destroy the principles of obedience due to it by weakening the love and respect of the people for their king. The *Encyclopedie* has consecrated these errors in its articles *Government* and *Authority*: all these things were ingeniously connected together. A romance is a sort of poem; in both the rules are nearly the same; one of the most prominent is, never to allow the personages to act out of character, and to keep in all respects to the times, manners, and places chosen: nothing of this kind is done in the *Belisarius* of M. Marmontel; his Belisarius talks always like a Parisian shopkeeper or an Encyclopedist, repeats all that Voltaire has said in his poem of *La Loi Naturelle*, and all that Rousseau has written in his various works on government, finances, nobility, the court, and virtue; it is particularly ludicrous to represent Belisarius as an *esprit fort*, seeing that this great man was extremely pious, and that, to show his respect for religion after the conquest of Africa, he caused to be borne among the other trophies, the books of the evangelists, adorned with gold and diamonds.

I hope to be pardoned for this digression, since the subject at once belongs to morals and literature.

I wrote also about this time *Alphonso*, or *The Natural Son*, a work, in which I think I have developed all that can reasonably and morally be said on the subject of bastards; the situations in this novel seem to me to be quite original, and I think I have described very accurately the manners of country towns and of the colonies.

As I have already stated, M. de Cabre, who was always deeply interested for me, had introduced me to the Marechal Bernadotte and his sister the Princess Joseph, two persons for whom I shall always entertain the tenderest attachment. The Princess Joseph was afterwards Queen of Naples; she had conceived a high opinion of me, and M. de Cabre, without my knowledge, easily persuaded her to appoint me governess to her children—a thing which was proposed to me, accompanied with the most brilliant and advantageous conditions. I have always had a natural aversion to whatever appeared a breach of propriety, and I felt that a person who had educated three princes and a princess of the house of Bourbon, ought not to become the instructress of the imperial family of Bonaparte; besides, I was

receiving a pension from the emperor, who was my benefactor—the first and only one I have ever found among sovereigns. I knew that he did not like persons of talent to quit France, and I felt I ought to take no step without consulting him. I replied to the Queen of Naples, (after expressing my gratitude for the honour done me,) that it was not sufficient for me that the emperor did not refuse his consent, as it was possible he might grant it merely ont of complaisance to the queen; that it was necessary he should tell me that such a nomination was agreeable to him, and that I should write to him on the subject, which I did. The emperor gave me no commands on the subject —consequently I did not go to Naples. This is exactly the way in which the thing happened:

I ought to add, the *Queen of Naples of her own accord*, and certainly without my having any idea of the kind, insisted on granting me a pension of three thousand francs; she was a queen and acknowledged as such by all Enrope, so that I ought to have accepted this; but being unwilling that a pension should be given me gratuitously, I undertook a work specially for her; this was a written course of history and literature, which formed a manuscript work for her and her children; I gave it up without keeping any copy of it; I gave

her besides the originals of all my Mythological Arabesques, which I had painted with the utmost care, and had splendidly bound. I forgot to speak of that work in another place; I regard it, however, as one of the most useful books of education.

I believe at this time I published my *Maison Rustique*, one of the most useful books I have composed for young people, and which cost me a whole year's fatiguing research. It was also at this period that my aunt, Madame de Montesson, fell into a state which left no hopes of her life. From the time of my return to France she had never rendered me the slightest service—but I neither asked nor expected any thing at her hands. She caressed me greatly; I went to see her about once a fortnight, and we were on very good terms together. As soon as I heard that her life was in danger, I went constantly to her house to attend on her, and to keep her company, from eleven in the morning till nine at night, when I returned to the Arsenal. As she liked to hear me read aloud, I read to her sometimes four or five hours a day; she suffered but little, and preserved her senses to the last moment. I did not leave her even on her death-bed; I sent to a priest to read to her the prayers of the dying; she had asked and received all the sacraments; I prayed for her behind the

curtains, in an under tone, without letting her see me, during the whole of her last agony. When she was dead I caused two wax candles to be lighted by her bed, I left a priest in her room to say the prayers for the dead, and returned to the Arsenal. Until Madame de Montesson's will was seen, my brother and I were sole heirs: my brother was at Bourdeaux, therefore I was the only person qualified to give orders in her house until the seals were removed; but with my usual thoughtlessness, as soon as her eyes were closed, I left the house, and did not return: I learned a few days after my aunt's death, that by her will, (which was never shown me,) she constituted M. de Valence her universal legatee, and that she left to me twenty thousand francs, of which M. de Valence should only be held to pay the interest, amounting to a thousand francs a year. Lastly, she added to this strange clause, that I should be debarred of my right to plead against him in a court of law, if the sum should not be paid regularly; she left the same legacy to my brother and on the same conditions. As my brother's pecuniary circumstances were not comfortable at that time, I gave him up my interest in the will and left him to enjoy it during eight years. Madame de Montesson left my grandson and her own great grand-

nephew, Amable de Lawoestine, the sum of four thousand francs once paid—just such a legacy as she might have left to her footman; she never gave him a farthing during her life-time. Certainly his military conduct, his brilliant successes in society, his amiable disposition, his goodness of heart, and his lofty sentiments, might have gained the affections of his grand-aunt, who ought to have been proud of such a nephew. Her will contained no legacy to any of her friends. She made no provision for Madame Robadet, her companion, who had sacrificed to her the whole of her youth, and her charming accomplishments—and who had passed many years with her, during which she paid her the tenderest attention.

I was extremely well pleased with my residence at the Arsenal, where I enjoyed the society of Casimir and an amiable child, called Alfred Lemaire, (whom I have already mentioned,) an orphan without any friends, whom Casimir, touched with his situation, had requested me to adopt; Casimir was then nineteen, and the child was not quite five; he discovered the best of dispositions, much cleverness, and great aptitude to learn many things; he did not disappoint my hopes; I shall speak of him afterwards in detail.

Casimir made a journey to England, where he met in every way with the most brilliant success. He was seventeen, and having at that age, the greatest distaste for the profession of music, he did not wish to reside there in that quality; but his admirable talents, his personal amiability, and his excellent conduct, caused him to be courted by the princes and princesses, and all the most distinguished society in England. He received no money from any one, but various persons made him magnificent presents; he kept but a small part of these, which he presented to me on my return. He then purchased articles for furnishing a lodging, of which he gave me several which he thought I wanted. He bought a cabriolet and horse; the rest of the money was devoted to family purposes; he disbursed no other part of it in superfluities for himself. On his return to France, he found Pamela living in the same hotel at Dover; Casimir was with Prince Esterhazy, who was bringing him to France in a packet of his own. On the evening of his arrival at Dover, Pamela begged Casimir to call on her; he went and found her in tears; she informed him that she was pursued by creditors who would arrest her, and force her to return to London, where she was sure to find others, and be thrown into the greatest

difficulties; that she would be freed from her fears and from her present difficulties if he would pay for her at that moment fifty louis in French money, and procure her means of passing furtively in the night on board of Prince Esterhazy's vessel. Casimir paid the fifty louis to her creditors; he obtained with some difficulty the permission she desired, and conveyed her, himself, at midnight on board of the packet boat, where he hid her at the bottom of the hold, as she dreaded mortally the arrival of new creditors.

Casimir came at full speed from Calais to Paris to inform me of the arrival of Pamela, to whom I had written, conjuring her not to come to Paris, but to return instead to Hamburg with Mr. Pitcairn, her husband, representing to her that she had a daughter with him, to whom she owed all her attentions. In spite of all my exhortations, she came; considerations of interest, which seemed to her plausible, had decided her to take this step. Casimir begged me as a favour to receive her at the Arsenal, and to give her his lodging, saying that he was very willing to sleep in a camp-bed. I offered her all this—that is to say, to lodge herself, her daughter, the interesting young Pamela, daughter of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and a companion, and to provide for her nourishment. I

only made one thing the condition of these arrangements, which was that she should only receive persons of my acquaintance. She refused all my offers; upon which I made every effort to induce her to hire a small lodging near me in the place Royale, representing to her that these lodgings were pretty and very cheap; that she might walk on foot to my house every day to dinner, and in this way her expenses would be very inconsiderable; but this offer she also refused.

M. Ameilhon, by his intrigues, aided by my natural indolence in all matters affecting my personal interests, succeeded in inducing the minister to write to me that my aparments were necessary to the library and proposing to me in exchange the lodging over-head, which was much less handsome, but consisted of more rooms, and to which belonged a little garden; the minister added that I was at liberty to remain my present apartments, but that my *love of literature* would doubtless lead me to accept his proposal. I did accept it merely to avoid all discussion, and to have the little garden. It was arranged that I should move when I chose; no time was prescribed.

M. de Laborie, whom I had long known, requested a private interview with me; he came and told me that he was charged by M. Michaud

and some other literary men, who had undertaken a new dictionary entitled *Biographie Universelle*, to propose to me on any conditions I might choose, to write in that dictionary, and to furnish the articles on celebrated women. I replied that I should agree to this, provided the dictionary was not written in an irreligious spirit; he replied that the very name of M. Michaud ought to make me easy on that head. That writer has always respected religion. I said also, that I should not engage in the work without having a list of my coadjutors in it; for that I should not like to place my name by the side of some other which I might despise; I added that my contempt for men of letters extended only to those who wished to destroy religion, consequently to annihilate morality; that I did not regard those as impious men who through levity had suffered a few phrases to fall from their pen, which might be erroneously interpreted; but that I should never consent to have for my colleagues men openly declaring themselves the disciples of Voltaire and Diderot; and that, in fact, I would willingly write in the same work with my personal enemies, provided they had written nothing against religion. M. de Laborie sent me the list, in which were the names of Messieurs Suard and Auger, both of

whom were my enemies, and passed for *philosophers*. The former had written in an irreligious spirit, cautiously; he was old, his works were forgotten, he had no longer any interest in flattering a powerful party; I believed he had become wiser, and I saw nothing wrong in having him for a colleague, any more than M. Auger, who had only written some newspaper articles, in which there was nothing positively reprehensible. I extended the same tolerance to several other persons who were in the list, but it was impossible for me to do so to M. Ginguené, who in some wretched works, had openly discovered the utmost fury against religion; he had besides given a public course of Italian literature, which discovered no sort of talent, and scandalized every body by its irreligious spirit.

This course has been printed; as the author had neither information nor industry, he procured the assistance in his miserable work of some young men, whom he paid at a low price for furnishing ready made extracts. He collected all these materials, arranging them at random, in chronological order, and frequently without inquiring whether the facts agreed among themselves. I shall quote but one example of this absurd

negligence, which will suffice to give an idea of the book and its author. In speaking of the famous Pico di Mirandola, M. Ginguené says, that this precocious person, feeing his end approaching, sent for Lorenzo de Medici; that the prince came to visit him, found him dying, took him in his arms and received his last sigh. Twenty pages afterwards, M. Ginguené says that Lorenzo de Medici on his death-bed sent for Pico di Mirandola, and died in his arms. Certainly here is a miracle as astonishing as those of religion which M. Ginguené denies. This inconceivable blunder has been pointed out in the *Journal of the Arts*, to which I sent a note along with the book; the thing was so curious that almost every body took the pains to verify it.

By discovering the same principles, M. Ginguené, M. Salgues, and some others, thought themselves the heirs of the wit of Voltaire. Being quite decided in my refusal to write in the same work with M. de Ginguené, I saw M. de Laborie in order to tell him so; I told him I was not desirous of the exclusion of any one, and that I begged him simply to reply to those who had commissioned him to speak to me, that my occupations did not allow me to undertake the work.

Instead of this mild and prudent reply, M. de Laborie related the fact, and wrote me on the subject a note, which I possess, and which shall be printed at the end of this work as a *justificatory document*. This note informed me that the Biographical Dictionary would gain every thing by the decision which had been made, which was *to procure the highest talent, and to exclude from the work a man unworthy to write in it*.

It is to be remarked that I had no personal feelings towards M. Ginguené; he had never written a word against me. I have never hated my enemies, but I have always sovereignly despised those of religion. Agreeably to the note of M. de Laborie, I undertook the engagement which had been proposed. My conditions were gladly accepted; I received in advance I believe, a thousand or twelve hundred francs, and I began to write the articles indicated, promising to furnish some within two months. In six weeks M. de Laborie wrote to me that they had not been able to get rid of M. Ginguené, and that they hoped I would take the necessary steps on the matter. I did not take any; I replied, that a bargain is void when you fail in the principal condition on which it is founded; I declared that I would not write in the *Universal Biography*, *a work altogether*

new;* I returned the money, for which I got a receipt in form, and by the whole adventure I gained about thirty new enemies, who have continued so ever since.

Not wishing to lose the articles I had written, nor those I had prepared, I made up of them a volume on women, which I entitled *The Influence of Women upon French Literature*, a work which was wanting, and which, I think, I have written with the utmost impartiality. The collaborators in the *Biography*, already furious at my secession, became quite mad when this work appeared; for they knew in their hearts that the articles on women in their work were not equal to mine; they ventured to say, even in print, that the articles of my work belonged to them, and that I had injured the dictionary by withdrawing from my engagements. It is very easy to despise false accusations which relate to a point of literature; but it is impossible not to reply to those which attack your honour and probity. I might have justified myself not only by publishing the letter of M. de Laborie, of which I have already spoken, but also two others which he wrote me after the bargain was broken off, in

* Such was the singular title given to it by the writers.—*(Note by the Author.)*

which he formally declares that I am quite right throughout the affair, and that all my proceedings are unimpeachable.

I had preserved these letters. Nevertheless, through a feeling of honour and delicacy, I found myself greatly embarrassed; besides my repugnance to compromise M. de Laborie, and to raise up irreconcileable enemies against him, I could not have chosen a worse time to publish any thing of his; for he was then in disgrace with the head of the government, and even banished from Paris. I took the resolution of printing in a pamphlet, a formal denial of the calumnious imputation, adding that if another word was said in answer to my denial, in spite of all my repugnance arising from good feeling and delicacy, as every thing should yield to honour, I should publish *three letters with their signatures*, which would prove beyond doubt the honesty and uprightness of my proceedings, and the unworthy nature of the calumny of which I was the object; that I would recommend complete silence on the subject, which I should consent to accept as a retractation: I was obeyed; not a single line or word was made use of in reply, and the matter dropped. I reviewed in three pamphlets which I successively published, and which met with great success, the three first volumes of the *Biography*;

they were in fact, very open to criticism, as regarded four or five authors, (M. Ginguené at their head, and the worst of them all,) both in a religious and literary point of view: I pointed out among other things such nonsense by M. Guinguené, that he did not attempt even to justify it; but his hatred to me became implacable, and exhaled itself in the shape of a quantity of libels, all more absurd the one than the other: he made enemies to me of all the *small pamphleteers*, and *discoursers about literature*, who are more redoubtable from their clamours and intrigues than genuine literary men, whose enmities are *en grand*, who have not time to deal them out in retail, and who, with their talents and information, are capable of acknowledging and repairing their errors. I enjoyed however, in the course of this dispute a triumph which touched me deeply: the article Biron, (Duke of Lauzun,) was most unjust and injurious to the memory of that unfortunate person, and contained moreover real calumnies about the last Duke of Orleans. I do not believe that the writer, who was an estimable man, wrote this article with any malignant views; but he had been ill-informed, and his article was full of falsehoods. I wrote a pamphlet to refute it; and it produced such an effect that a cancel was inserted in the volume. Another author wrote

the article over again exactly as I had suggested, and a proof was sent to me. This success of a criticism dictated by truth, and the remembrance of ancient friendship, appeared to me equally honourable and satisfactory. I am so incapable of animosity, that having no wish to perpetuate the recollection of these quarrels, I never allowed these pamphlets to be reprinted in the collected edition of my works.

This moderation was the more meritorious in me, as these pamphlets had procured me not only universal approbation, but the private and special suffrage of a literary man distinguished for his taste, information and talents, and who was at the same time one of my dearest friends. The following is the letter which M. Pieyre wrote to me on the subject :

"On coming home last night, Madam, I received your pamphlet : the bad weather prevents me from personally assuring you of the great pleasure it afforded me : I could not go to bed before reading it ; it is written with animation and interest. There is in it sound logic, allied to great strength of proofs, and strong evidence of the bad faith of your detractors. Yes, *upon reflec-*

tion, they must feel, that it would have been better for them to have assumed another tone. How noble and how worthy of you is that of your pamphlet! how firm and clear are the two first pages on biography! and what delicacy of conduct, when you are provoked to tell all! But how much honour your silence throws on yourself, and what shame upon them!—they will now be silent, their fear will oblige them to be so. What a noble motive! you crush them, and your charges contain matter which should make them blush ever again to raise their eyes: but the initial letter protects them. They have sought the combat—their malevolence has blinded them so as to give you many advantages! —your constant moderation emboldened them, and they fancied they could abuse you with impunity. They will see that every thing has an end; and that you can make use of your arms when you choose, if you are forced to it: you thereby render a service to all honest men. The shaft of ridicule in your hands never misses its aim: the laughers are all on your side! These Diomedes are now in the situation of Ajax, slaying the sheep; they must really have been as mad as he. Every thing is complete in your answer: solid reasoning and natural gaiety of sarcasm. There is something in it

for all tastes—and you will accordingly find that its success will be great.* The most indifferent cannot choose but be interested in the defence of so good a cause—that of a person so unjustly and violently provoked as you have been: judge then of the interest felt by one who is tenderly devoted to you. I am anxious to enjoy the general effect; I cannot discover a line which should enfeeble it; and your just indignation has no where induced you to overstep proper bounds. This is the way in which a person of talent writes who has a strong cause. An evil conscience betrays itself. You announce a pamphlet as in the press, on the two volumes which have appeared; and a continuation as the others appear. This will delight every body, and alarm those who have been the first to draw the sword: their own companions will blame them for an aggression which has led you to put on your armour. Your articles will sow division in their camp: there are too many different banners

* In spite of this success, which was so universal that it led M. Suard, (who was severely handled in those pamphlets,) to say that *my only talent was that of criticism,* I was so moderate as not to print these pamphlets in any collected edition of my works. In the last of these I threatened my detractors with the publication of letters which would prove the truth of what I said, if they were not silent: they were so, and the dispute thus ended.—(*Note by the Author.*)

to allow of their marching long together; and your trumpet will soon rally round you the bravest of them. I shall see you, Madam, as soon as the weather will allow; in the mean time, receive the expressions of my tender, respectful, and unalterable friendship.

"Yours, &c.

"PIEYRE."

I shall finish this article by the narrative of a little literary adventure, of a very singular kind: there had been placed at the head of the censure on books as minister, a furious philosopher, M. de Pomereuil: he was a warm protector of the *Biographie*, and being extremely indignant at my critiques, he struck out twenty-one pages of my pamphlet: as there was nothing personal that could lead to such a suppression, and as the whole referred to literature, this appeared to me singular. I demanded an explanation, and was informed that the suppression had been made by the immediate orders of the minister: upon this, I wrote to him to request an audience, which was granted me, and I called on him. The subject was an article on D'Assoucy,* a wretched writer, accused of an

* D'Assoucy, (says an author,) chose the most pitiful of all kinds of writing, without having the talents of Scarron to excuse

unnatural crime, and who, being almost convicted of the crime, was very nearly subjected to, and had great difficulty in escaping from, the penalty of the law, which then condemned criminals of that description to be burnt alive. The author of the article in the *Biography*, in order to inform the reader what was D'Assoucy's suspected *crime*, states, that he was accused of something which *ladies* hold in *abomination:* and in my pamphlet, I said, that without either endeavouring to explain or to guess what the crime was, I imagined that since the law punished it by burning, not only *ladies* but *gentlemen*, were likely to hold it in *abomination:* all this was suppressed.

M. de Pomereuil received me with a chilling coldness, which almost went the length of unpoliteness. I asked him the reason of the suppres-

it. His life, like his prose and verse, was a mixture of misery, burlesque, and stupidity. All the places he visited, (and they were many,) were marked by new misfortunes to him. At Calais he was nearly thrown into the sea as a sorcerer. He was very hardly used at Montpellier: at Rome, was thrown into the dungeons of the Inquisition; and on his return to France, was first imprisoned in the Bastile, and afterwards in the prison of the Châtelet, where he remained six months. This man, whose life was so strange, and had been so often in danger, lived to the age of 85, and died in 1679. His poetry has been published in 3 volumes 12mo.—(*Note by the Editor.*)

sion of my twenty-one pages; to which he replied rudely, and in a sort of passion—"*What the devil, Madam, are you not yet tired with thirty-five years scolding of the philosophers?*"—"No, sir," I replied, with a smile of disdain, "and the kind of indignation which you so *frankly* display, will not lead me to change my opinion: but, to return to the subject of my visit—why did you give orders for the suppression of the pages which I have had the honour to read to you; and particularly those relating to D'Assoucy?" At this pressing question, M. de Pomereul scratched his ear, and said, "What a strange thing is the intolerance of the saints! *they wish to burn a man because he did not happen to like women! his aversion for them was a piece of bad taste—that was all.*"

This discourse in the mouth of a minister, addressed to a woman with whom he was not acquainted, so astonished me, that I remained for a moment as if stupefied; he thought, apparently, that he had driven me to an extremity by the force of his arguments, for he assumed an air of satisfaction so comical, that it would have made me laugh if I could have overcome my indignation. I then stated, that in spite of my *saintship*, I did not wish any body to be burned; that I had even declared, I did not pretend to guess what

was the crime in question; that I had only said, if the law punished it by fire, it was likely to be the object of every one's horror. "Punished with fire! punished with fire!" cried M. de Pomereuil, "these are *Gothic barbarisms*, now happily out of fashion." "But once more, Sir, allow me to say, that I am only speaking of the law; I have nothing to do with the matter; I repeat, that I wish to know nothing about the crime."—"Know nothing! you know very well what it is, and I repeat to you, Madam, that *this crime* is only, as I have just said, a matter of bad taste, which surely does not deserve burning." "May I hope, Sir, for the restoration of my twenty-one pages?" "We shall see, Madam; I will think of it." At these words I rose: he wished to stammer out some excuses about the *useless trouble* I had taken in calling on him: I replied, that our conversation had been so curious, that I did not regret the time it had cost me; I turned my back to go away, and heard the sound of his footsteps accompany me a short way to lead me to the door; I pretended not to perceive this, but opened the door, and walked out. I do not think ever minister displayed in a private audience to any person more impertinence, folly, and want of principle. This union is only to be found in a modern philosopher, full of enthusiasm

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARAS

for his sect. I greatly ridiculed this audience, which raised me new enemies; for M. de Pomereuil had many partisans. I have been told that he is a man of talent, and an honest man; but he is certainly not calculated to fill a high station.

For four or five years, I had been in the habit of seeing more society than I wished, yielding with too much complaisance to the wishes of others in that particular. Among foreigners, there was one to whom I became particularly attached; this was a Pole, called the Count de Kosakoski; notwithstanding his travels, his absence, and many revolutions, our friendship has always been equally lively and tender. M. de Kosakoski is distinguished for the elevation of his sentiments, the purity of his principles, and the originality of his mind. He did for my sake a thing which may appear puerile, but which I valued extremely. He asked me for little samples of all the things I worked, and I gave them to him. He had them arranged in a large box, which was made on purpose for them as large as a desk, and this he carried about with him in all his journeys. Being in the French service, he went to Russia. There he lost all his baggage; but he had taken so much care of the box containing my handy work, that it was the only thing he succeeded in preserv-

ing. One never regrets the time which is destined to friendship, however frivolously it is employed, when it is thus appreciated. The behaviour of the Emperor of Russia towards him since the restoration was so magnanimous, that I cannot help here citing some instances of it. M. de Kosakoski possessed large estates in Poland, and persuaded that Napoleon would restore its dignity to his native country, he had attached himself to him in that idea. After Paris was taken, he followed him and remained with him all the time he passed at Fontainebleau, and never quitted him till the moment he entered his carriage on his departure for the island of Elba; M. de Kosakoski on this returned to Paris, where he was informed, that all his goods were confiscated; he then determined to go in person, and solicit the restoration of them from the Emperor of Russia; he presented himself at that monarch's audience, who when his name was announced, asked him if it was true that he had followed Napoleon to Fontainebleau:—"Yes, Sire," replied M. de Kosakoski, "and up to the time of his departure I was with him; if he had asked me to accompany him, I should never have hesitated." The emperor applauded this answer, and asked M. de Kosakoski what he desired of him? "Sire," replied

M. de Kosakoski, "I ask the restitution of my property in Poland." "It shall be restored to you," replied the emperor; who immediately gave orders on the subject, and all the property was recovered.

Another foreigner, a charming lady, who was to me all goodness, was the Duchess of Courland; no one was ever more charming in face, disposition, or manners; I shall relate a curious anecdote of her. The empress had an enormous quantity of Bonaparte's letters, written in his own hand, and addressed to Josephine, (then his wife,) during his campaigns in Italy, and his residence at Turin; Josephine apparently attaching no value to them, allowed the box containing them to lie about, and had even left it open. A faithless servant stole them, unknown to her, and offered them, I do not know how, to Madame de Courland. She gave me all these letters to copy. I read them with avidity, and found them totally different from what I had imagined.*

The following is a charming expression which I found in one of the letters: Bonaparte was blaming Josephine for the weakness and frivolity

* The editor of these memoirs possesses a copy of these curious letters, and proposes speedily to publish them.—(*Note by the Editor.*)

of her character, and he adds—"*Nature has given you a soul of lace, to me one of steel.*" The common phrase is *a soul of cotton*. There was something of gallantry and good taste in substituting for that gross expression the word *lace*, which at all events presents a delicate and pleasing image. In another letter, he displays much jealousy with respect to Josephine's visitors, and especially on *the quantity of young dandies** whom she received daily; and he orders her rigorously to dismiss them all. It is plain from the succeeding letters that Josephine obeyed, but that she thenceforth complained of her health and of her nerves; Bonaparte then imagined that *ennui* was the cause of the derangement of her health—accordingly he writes to her, that he would rather suffer from jealousy, than know her to be ill, and that he allows her to *recal the dandies*.

These letters were in a hand very difficult to read, but nevertheless I succeeded in making them all out; they were truly clever and touching. There was no appearance of ambition in them; they expressed extreme sensibility, and proved that Bonaparte felt for his wife the most lively and tender affection, while Josephine was incapable of replying to these exalted sentiments.

* In orig. *muscadins*.

In the mean time, M. Ameilhon urged me to quit my handsome apartments, for those I was to have in exchange; and finding that I put off doing so, he bethought himself in order to quicken my motions, of an expedient at once simple and extraordinary. I had an antichamber, common also to the library, of which he was director; the large doors of my apartments opened into that antichamber, which I was obliged to cross in entering or leaving my rooms. One day, after paying some morning visits, I returned to my lodgings about two o'clock, and found the passage into my rooms particularly easy, as M. Ameilhon had removed the two folding doors. After having had a positive explanation of this proceeding, and seeing that the library was still open, I entered: I found several young men there, writing or reading for their instruction, and saw M. Ameilhon gravely seated before a large table, on which was lying a large quarto, which he was perusing: I am the person in the world the least fond of scenes, but this strange adventure completely forced me out of my natural character; I went up to M. Ameilhon, and said: "Monsieur, I have just been informed, indeed I perceive that you have carried off the door of my apartments; I suppose it is a right belonging to the director of the Arsenal library,

and in that case I shall trouble you to show me the authority by which you act thus, and I shall immediately submit; if not, have the goodness instantly to replace the doors, otherwise, I shall go without delay to complain to the minister, and in passing, to the judge." At these words, without waiting for his reply, I went out of the room, and entered my own apartments, placing two sentinels in the antiroom, in order to ascertain what was passing there, and desiring them to acquaint me with whatever should take place. On leaving the library, I had cast a glance upon the spectators, and read in every face surprise and approbation.

An act of such folly and violence is hardly to be conceived; the whole of the Arsenal witnessed it. I explain it by the idea that M. Ameilhon had of my good-nature and my invincible aversion to all sorts of discussion; I had yielded in so many things, to his fancies and his despotism, that he never doubted this act of vigour on his part would force me to depart that very day, and move into my new lodging, of which I had furnished two rooms. My discourse, however, produced its effect; he feared another revolt, and the doors were replaced without delay. He wrote me one of the most foolish notes in the world, to excuse

himself, giving me such foolish reasons, that I could not even remember them. I remained a fortnight longer in these apartments, and at last quitted them to the great satisfaction of M. Ameilhon. It was agreed that I should carry into my new lodging three handsome glasses from the old one, yet I could never obtain them from M. Ameilhon; but what was worst of all, I never got the little garden, which was the object of all my wishes; I used entreaties and threats, but all was of no avail. I should have been obliged to write to the minister in order to back my claim; but I dreaded a series of little persecutions like those I had already experienced, and I renounced the project.

I forgot to notice a fête which was given me in my old rooms, and which was so charming that I ought from gratitude to mention it. A lady whom I had never seen, Madame du Brosseron, who was acquainted with my brother, begged me to allow her to pass the evening of the *Mardi gras* along with some persons in disguise; I consented: the fête was to take place in four or five days. On the day of the *Mardi gras* they begged me not to enter my drawing-room till the evening—at half past eight I was told I might enter; I saw no other change at first than a curtain hung over the

folding doors of the entrance; shortly after I heard a fine symphony—it was the music of the Conservatoire; the curtain was then drawn, and Madame du Brosseron entered, disguised as an enchantress, holding a wand in her hand; she came up to me, and requested permission to show me some of the greatest prodigies which her art had ever produced. This little compliment was followed by a verse of a song, announcing that I was about to witness a long series of pictures, as charming as various. While the enchantress was singing, the curtain had been again closed; but she caused it to be once more opened, and I saw through a transparent screen a picture, admirable for its grouping and costume, representing a scene from *Adèle et Théodore*. Both the figures and attitudes were admirable. While I looked on, the enchantress explained it by saying a verse; the curtain then closed, and while a new picture was preparing, the orchestra played a new symphony; afterwards a series of pictures, taken from all my works was exhibited, of which the composition and colouring were quite brilliant and beautiful. Each picture was explained in a couplet sung by Madame de Brosseron, and each pause was filled up by a symphony. The persons of the scene, changing their costumes according to the

subjects, had faces which seemed created expressly for the characters they represented; for example, Mademoiselle d'Aubanton,* aged fifteen, of radiant beauty, covered with precious stones, and dressed in a robe embroidered with gold, was a perfect picture of the beautiful Duchess of Cléves, in *the Knights of the Swan.* Olivier and Isambard with their bucklers and their devices were admirably represented by Messieurs d'Offemont and Desangiers. Mesdames du Crest and Georgette gave a perfect notion of Diana and Alphonsine in the *Cavern*: (in *La Tendresse Maternelle ou l'Education sensitive.*) Madame d'Aubanton, still very handsome, seemed Madame de Maintenon herself. Madame de Sainte Anne, sister of Madame du Brosseron, who had a most agreeable face, was truly touching as Madame de La Vallière in her nun's dress, and in her cell. Madame Delarue, daughter of the late Beaumarchais, displayed infinite grace as Ida in the *Jupon vert*. In short, all these pictures were really delicious, as well as the couplets written by M. de La Tremblaye and my brother: they were given to me, and I still preserve them.

After this exhibition, which lasted two hours

* She afterwards married M. Carafa, the musical composer.—(*Note by the Editor.*)

and a half, Madame du Brosseron disappeared, and a few minutes afterwards returned with all the personages of the pictures, who still wore their splendid costumes. Madame du Brosseron was attired as Flora, she held in her hand a group of flowers, which she presented to me; all the rest of the company formed a group, holding up a beautiful picture splendidly framed and glazed, consisting of a wreath of beautiful artificial flowers, in the centre of which were my initials. I embraced all the ladies in company; I admired their costumes; afterwards we sat down, drank tea, and conversed till two in the morning. I never received nor witnessed a more ingenious fête. A short time previous, Casimir had given me one on my birth-day, the 25th of January; that fête was less brilliant, but more touching to my heart. Casimir astonished me by the diversity and the perfection of his talents; his harp played a new and interesting part; he composed a scene without words, of which his harp only was to express the subject; it was David calming the fury of Saul. Michelot, who had just come out with success at the Theatre Français, represented Saul; Casimir, aged seventeen, was David; he was dressed with admirable taste by Talma, who was invited to the fête, and who had the goodness to arrange his

costume. Michelot had a superb dress, and the energy and truth of his pantomime ravished the spectators. The handsome face of Casimir, his youth, the expression and beauty of his playing, and the singular beauty of his musical composition, rendered the scene quite enchanting and inimitable; the scene was played on a small stage erected in the anti-chamber. We played a Vaudeville proverb by M. Radet; Casimir and *Joly*, a delightful actor at the Vaudeville, played parts in it with all the gaiety and grace imaginable. M. Briffaut, author of the tragedy of Ninus, too, performed in another piece, a scene in verse written by him for me, which met with great applause. This piece of verse is so agreeable, that I have preserved it, and I have no doubt my readers will thank me for inserting it here. The vanity of a writer is gone at my age; the publication of it so late is a proof of this. I merely wish to embellish these memoirs by a charming literary morceau.

LA RENOMMEE ET LA CRITIQUE.

DIALOGUE,

Lu à la fête de Mme. de Genlis.

LA CRITIQUE.

Où vas-tu, déesse aux cent voix ?
Fixe un moment l'essor de tes rapides aîles ;
Ecoute.

LA RENOMMEE.

Je ne puis.

LA CRITIQUE.

Qui te presse ?

LA RENOMMEE.

Tu vois
Ces lauriers, ces palmes nouvelles.

LA CRITIQUE.

De ces lauriers si verts quel front doit être orné ?

LA RENOMMEE.

Un front que mille fois mes mains ont couronné.
Je vais chez la muse immortelle
Qui traça Théodore et qui peignit Adèle.
Tu ne la connois pas.

LA CRITIQUE.

Hélas! que trop.

LA RENOMMEE.

Qui! toi ?

LA CRITIQUE.

Son nom est un fléau pour moi :
Je ne peux pas mordre sur elle,
Moi qui, grâces au ciel, trouve toujours moyen
De faire au champ des arts une moisson si belle.
Chez elle, c'est pitié, je ne récolte rien,
Et pourtant j'y travaille bien.
Oh ! quelle disette cruelle !
Entre nous, je l'avoue ici de bonne foi,
Si tout étoit formé sur un pareil modèle,
Je serois bientôt sans emploi.
Chaque jour, sous sa plume élégante et fleurie,
Voit éclore un chef-d'œuvre où l'esprit se marie
A la piquante instruction ;
Où, sans la comprimer, le goût et la justesse
Réglent l'imagination ;
Où tout plaît, égaye, intéresse,
Par le secret d'un style harmonieux, coulant,
De verve, d'heureux mots, de traits étincelans,
Riche de sentiment et de délicatesse ;
Modèle universel mieux senti qu'imité ;
Soit que sur les travers de la société
Elle attache, en riant, le trait du ridicule ;
Soit que sur les erreurs d'une amante crédule
Elle fasse en secret soupirer la beauté
Qui rougit, rêve, s'intimide ;
Et l'œil fixé long-temps sur une page humide,
Mesure, d'un regard encore épouvanté,
Toute la profondeur de l'abîme perfide,
Dont, en passant, son flambeau si rapide
Nous découvre la vérité ;
Soit qu'au milieu des cours inquiétant le vice,
Sa main jette, en jouant, les cent masques divers

Dont il pare son front pervers ;
Et, de ses faux attraits dévoilant l'artifice,
Oppose à sa difforme et triste nudité
L'éternelle et chaste beauté
D'un cœur orné de bienfaisance,
De candeur et de pureté.
Et jusqu'en un cachot place la volupté
Sur les lèvres de l'innocence.
Dans tous ces tableaux enchanteurs,
Chaque portrait est juste et chaque ton fidèle ;
Le goût tient le pinceau, l'art choisit les couleurs,
Et la nature est le modèle.
Que faire? par instinct moi je veux censurer.
Mais voyez le malheur, je me laisse attirer
Par un plaisir secret qui, malgré moi, m'enivre :
Le crayon de mes mains tombe en touchant son livre,
Et je ne sais plus qu'admirer.
Je me détourne pour pleurer,
Ou je perds mon humeur dans un éclat de rire ;
Le beau profit pour la Satire !
Non, elle est sans défaut pour me désespérer.
Ce qui m'achève encor, sans cesse elle t'éveille.

LA RENOMMEE.

Avec elle, il est vrai, rarement je sommeille :
Aussi je me fatigue à porter en tous lieux
Le bruit toujours croissant de son nom glorieux ;
Elle m'occupe plus que vingt auteurs ensemble,
Et dans soi seule elle rassemble
Tous les talens, tous les succès.
Tant qu'on aura du goût, je ne dois point prétendre
Qu'on puisse se lasser jamais
De l' applaudir et de l'entendre,
Le moyen que je vive en paix !

Du moins si je n'avois qu'à prôner ses ouvrages!
Mais sur mille autres dons qu'elle sait réunir
Il me faut, sans relâche, appeler les suffrages
De l'Europe et de l'avenir.
Je la vois au milieu d'une troupe enfantine:
Semblable à ce Dieu bienfaiteur,
Qui parle par sa bouche et se peint dans son cœur,
Elle accueille en son sein leur foiblesse orpheline,
Et ses bras en tout temps sont ouverts au malheur;
Prévoyante, du haut de son fécond génie,
Elle épanche sur eux, comme un fleuve opulent,
Les dons de la vertu, les trésors du talent.
Et tous ces arbrisseaux dont la tige fleurie
Sans elle n'eût point vu ses rameaux verdoyans
Balancer dans les airs leur masse enorgueillie,
S'élèvent, sous ses yeux, comme autant de présens
Dont elle dotte la patrie.

LA CRITIQUE.

Tu ne me contes rien qui n'ait plus de cent fois
Excité ma bile et ma haine.
J'ai beau vouloir, au fond de mon esprit sournois,
Donner un mauvais tour à tout ce que je vois,
De son âme sensible, humaine,
Je suis certaine malgré moi:
Je le suis, et voilà ma peine.

LA RENOMMEE.

L'aimable caractère! adieu. Je m'aperçoi
Que le temps vole à tire d'aile.
On s'oublie aisément, sitôt qu'on parle d'elle,
Ou qu'on lit un de ses écrits.
C'est aujourd'hui sa fête, et pour tous ses amis
Ce jour est un jour d'allégresse;

Je vais m'associer à leur touchante ivresse.
Le cercle sera court, mais il sera charmant :
De nos brillans Français c'est l'élite imposante,
    Et tout ce que le Nord présente
    De plus aimable et de plus grand ;
    Je serai dans mon élément :
Tous les arts lui rendront un hommage fidèle.
    De cette enceinte solennelle,
Comme tu peux penser, ton visage est banni ;
Adieu. Je plains ton sort ; c'est être assez puni
    De ne pouvoir approcher d'elle.

Between the acts, Casimir danced a *pas seul* in a beautiful manner, and afterwards he performed on an instrument but little known, called the *fer harmonique;* he played upon it in an angelic manner, to the delight of the whole audience, and finished the performance by a short comic scene, which he performed behind the curtain, which was let down; he first played on the guitar and afterwards five or six different parts, with various imitations, of which the illusion was surprising. After the performance, he presented me with two beautiful pictures by himself, the one representing a landscape, the other flowers in relief, sculptured in wax with curious perfection. The fête terminated by an *ambigu*. There were present about forty persons, and all were in a state of enthusiasm. This evening's performances led my friends to ask

for others; and I gave several which met with the same success.

My acquaintance with M. Briffaut became daily more intimate, as he showed the greatest friendship for Casimir—a sentiment which Casimir partook with all the natural sincerity of his character. I had also become acquainted with a young man full of talents and excellent qualities—the Count Joseph d'Estourmel, one of the friends belonging to this period, whom I have had the good fortune to preserve. I shall here detail a scene which would have formed a very fine incident in one of Mrs. Radcliffe's romances. One day the princess de Beaufremont came to carry me out on a morning visit to the Duchess of Courland; we found her in her cabinet with eight or ten other persons; M. de Talleyrand, the Viscountess de Laval, M. de Narbonne, &c. &c. Half an hour passed in conversation, and as I rose to take leave, I was induced to stay, by hearing the persons present say with a mysterious air, "*She must see it.*" I asked for an explanation of this, but none was given me; and I imagined, by the number of select persons assembled, and who did not appear to be accidentally on a visit, that there was to be some little fête of which I was to be a witness. In a quarter of an hour a footman entered and

said, *All is ready*; we then rose, and the duchess begged us to pass into the drawing-room. I expected to see something charming, and I was greatly surprised at the scene which struck my eyes on my entrance. In the middle of the room stood a table, before which sat a tall man dressed in black, of a severe aspect, and whose face was unknown to me. I was told to advance: I approached, cast my eyes on the table, and saw that it was entirely covered with human skulls. The person was M. Gall: he was demonstrating his system to the persons present from these heads. He was not told who I was, and he began to lecture. It appeared to me very curious and satisfactory, consequently, I do not think that his system leads to materialism. M. Gall only wishes to prove by facts that we are born with divers dispositions and inclinations: but he always adds, that morality and religion may modify, correct, or perfect them. There is nothing new in the system, or that can be disputed, except the experiments and the signs, which indicate these different dispositions and inclinations. In showing us the different protuberances upon the heads, he told us that all which were to be found on the lower part of the head were animal, and denoted bad and low inclinations; and that those which were on the top of the head or

forehead, were indications of talent or elevation of character; he finished by showing us the finest and rarest of all the protuberances, because it marks, according to him, three virtues—religion, elevation of mind, and perseverance; it lies on the top and middle of the head.

This demonstration was in secret particularly agreeable to me, because I have the bump in question to a degree of size which is quite extraordinary. I did not boast of having that glorious protuberance, but I determined to exhibit it in proper time and place to M. Gall, and very soon I had an opportunity of doing so. It was agreed, that all the party present should come next morning to my apartments to see the library of the Arsenal. They came as agreed on, and M. Gall was of the party. When the company met in my drawing-room, I took him apart; I had no bonnet on, and I made him touch my head: he immediately cried out with enthusiasm—"Ah! how fine that is!" He then explained the subject of his admiration; and M. de Talleyrand, in speaking of me, said, "You see, ladies, that she is not a hypocrite." I was sorry that Casimir's absence prevented his head from being examined, but I have felt it since, and he has also in a remarkable manner that fine protuberance. I begged M. Gall to examine the head

of Alfred: he found it a fine one, and immediately said that he had the protuberances of geometry and mechanics: in fact, he has a genius for mechanics of a high kind. Alfred was then nine or ten years old.

M. Marigné, to whom I had presented a little basket made by myself of melon seeds, wrote immediately the following impromptu:

Joli panier, don plein de grâce,
Souvenir cher et précieux,
N'abandonne plus cette place:
Reste toujours devant mes yeux,
    Joli panier.

Joli panier, de ta présence
J'éprouverai plus d'un effet;
Déjà je ressens l'influence
De l'effet rare qui t'a fait,
    Joli panier.

Joli panier, du temps qui passe
Tu m'apprends comme on doit jouir.
Comment l'esprit qui se délasse
N'est pas oisif dans son loisir,
    Joli panier.

Joli panier, quhnd je contemple
Tes réseaux qu'a tissus Genlis,
De bon gôut j'y vois un exemple,
Un embléme de ses écrits,
    Joli panier.

Joli panier, ta transparence
De son style peint la clarté :
Tes contours en ont l'élégance,
Tes liens la solidité,
Joli panier.

Joli panier, dans ta texture
Je me trouve aussi retracé,
Car comme toi, de ma nature,
Hélas ! je suis panier percé,
Joli panier.

Joli panier, garde ces lignes
Qu'à toi seul je veux confier,
Et puissent mes vers être dignes
D'être mis tous dans le panier,
Joli panier.

Joli panier, pensant à celle,
Pensant jusqu'à l'instant dernier,
A celle que ce don rappelle,
Je dirai, lors, adieu panier,
Joli panier.

M. Fiévée, whose conversation, when you are well acquainted with him, is so animated, interesting, and clever, often spoke to me of articles which he addressed to the emperor, and which were always full of good sense: if the correspondence were printed, it would do him infinite honour. Napoleon gave him the situation of auditor, which entitled him to be a member of the council. I gave him on this head some important advice, for which

he has often thanked me since. I advised him when he had any thing important to propose in council, to reserve it always for his correspondence, unless the matter was so pressing as not to allow of delay for a day, or even for a few hours. M. Fiévee followed my advice, and gained thereby two things: first, that the emperor felt gratified; second, that appropriating the idea as it were to himself, he naturally was more interested in it, and supported it more strongly. M. Fiévee told me that he was quite astonished at the talent, the acuteness, and the goodnature which the emperor discovered in council: he allowed himself to be contradicted, and even interrupted while speaking, without appearing to be at all offended: this is a fact which renders those who were about him the more criminal if they did not boldly tell him the truth.

M. Alibert, a physician, and a man of letters and science, came also from time to time to the Arsenal: I loved exceedingly his animated, instructive, and frank conversation: he joins to this talent many excellent qualities, among others that of being unalterable towards his friends.

The Countess of Choiseul, a lady of whom I am never weary of speaking, has a face as charming as it is regular, and unites to the best principles

the most attaching qualities. She was born a poetess, and of a very elevated kind: she composed at sixteen, verses which would do honour to a poet of forty. She has constantly cultivated this fine talent; but her modesty has led her to retain her productions hitherto in her portfolio. She afterwards married the Count de Choiseul Gouffier, so celebrated and so worthy of being so, through his love for the arts, his talents, his travels, and the splendid works he has published. He might in point of age have been the father of Madame de Choiseul: she had for him an attachment founded on esteem and admiration: she married him in order to take care of his old age, a duty which she fulfilled in an exemplary manner; and she honoured his memory not only by erecting a tomb to it, but by the most touching regrets.

M. de Fontanes came three or four times to see me at the Arsenal. Never did a man of so much talent show so little in his conversation. He cannot be accused of the *galimatias* of the new schools; but he has something in his manner of pretension to the light and lively tone of other times, which seemed to me wanting in grace. As a poet he is below his reputation, for he never composed any great poetical work; as an orator in the Senate, he may be justly praised for having

had the good taste to reject all false brilliancy and neologisms, for having written his speeches with purity, and talent, and elegance. He has always displayed sentiments of religion, and this is a species of courage which in our days at least can only belong to a correct thinker, and a person of an elevated mind.*

At an early period of my return to France, M. de Cabre introduced me to Madame Cabarus, formerly Madame Tallien, and since, Madame de Caraman. I found her to be what she is—handsome, obliging, and amiable. Madame de Valence had written to me in Germany, that she had saved her life during the reign of terror, and I looked upon her deliverer with tender emotion: in the same person I saw the woman who really freed France from the cruelties of Robespierre. I heard M. de Valence employ a very pretty phrase in speaking of Madame Tallien while we were both at Hamburg; some one was saying that we ought to give Madame Bonaparte the title of *Notre Dame des Victoires*, on which M. de Valence said, that in that case, Madame Tallien merited the surname of *Notre Dame de Bon Secours*.†

* He is dead since this was written.—(*Note by the Author.*)

† There existed at Paris before the Revolution a large abbey of this name, where my mother was educated.—(*Note by the Author.*)

Prince Jerome, afterwards King of Westphalia, came several times to see me at the Arsenal; I found him possessed of the most amiable manners, and great politeness, besides the talent of conversing agreeably.

I had just finished a work which had long been commenced, to which I had devoted all the pains which were likely to enhance my talents in this way. This was a set of all the mythological flowers, painted of their natural size; two or three lines, written beneath each plant, explained the metamorphosis or the consecration. I had written no particular text; frequently several plants were drawn upon the same piece of paper, encircled with a frame which was called a *passe-partout*. The whole formed seventy-two pictures. I showed them to several artists, who were charmed with them—among others Alphonso Giroux. Some time after being in want of money, I was desirous of selling them. I was sure that by proposing them to the King of Westphalia, I should obtain a liberal purchaser; but being unwilling to abuse either his natural generosity or his kindness for me, I found means of getting the collection mentioned to him as being executed by an unknown artist. He expressed a wish to see it; the idea and the execution pleased him; he offered six

thousand francs for it, which I accepted. When Giroux was informed of this, he told me he was extremely grieved that I had not given him the preference. The King of Westphalia, on learning that the drawings were mine, addressed very obliging reproaches to me on the subject. I replied in such a way as to convince him that the same feelings of delicacy which had led me to conceal my name, would never allow me to change any arrangements I had made in the matter.

Several years afterwards the Queen of Westphalia, who was at Mendon, invited me to go thither; I have visited her there several times, and I congratulate myself on having become acquainted with a princess, charming in all respects, and whose conduct as a wife has been since so exemplary and so admirable.

I ought not to forget in this list a person then so agreeable for her face, the charm of her air, her manners and her talents—Madame Delarue, daughter of M. Beaumarchais. Madame Roger had a handsome country-house near Paris, where I went to pass a week with Madame Kevens; I was touched with the union which seemed to reign between Madame Roger and her husband, who was as handsome as she was pretty, and very agreeable in company. I there saw M. Carion de

Nisas, brother-in-law of Madame Roger, a man of talent, who has since written some tragedies, of which one has been several times performed at the Theatre Français, and the other was composed on a plot of my invention, of which I gave the plan in my *Imaginary Journal*. This piece is still in his portfolio; M. Pieyre, who has heard it read, has told me that it was extremely fine. There happened to me at this country house, an adventure in which Madame Roger was involved, which occasioned me the most painful embarrassment I have ever experienced in my life. I was one evening in the drawing-room, *entre chien et loup*, alone with her and Madame Kevens; we were talking of a woman whom she praised highly; I began by blaming her for having separated from her husband, and ended by declaiming against divorces: in the midst of this appropriate discourse, some one entered; we rose, and Madame de Kevens dragged me with her into the garden; on our arrival there, after having well scolded me, she threw me into the deepest surprise by informing me that Madame Roger was a divorcée, and that her first husband was called M. Bignon. I could not recover from my surprise to think that so young a woman, with so ingenuous a physiognomy, and who talked so well on virtue and reli-

gion, should have two husbands alive! . . . . I could not conceive, I repeat, that so young a person should have been separated from her husband; but it is to be remembered that she was but fifteen at the time of her separation. I did not like to venture again into the drawing-room— I rather wished to return immediately to Paris; but Madame Kevens prevented me from doing this, by representing to me that nothing could be so marked towards Madame Roger; that I must appear again; that I should find no feeling of resentment, but only a little embarrassment in Madame Roger, for that of course she would only ascribe what had passed to my ignorance. I remained, and Madame Roger was as obliging to me as usual. She never discovered any ill-feeling towards me on account of my blunder. This accident occurred shortly after I went first to the Arsenal, when I was totally unacquainted with the intrigues of existing society.

I became also acquainted with a woman, who was celebrated, and deserved to be so, Madame de Vannoz, as estimable in point of virtue as of talent; she wrote an Elegy on the *Tombs of Saint Dennis*, which has been thought fine by the best judges, even those who most admired that

of M. de Treneuil on the same subject; it was her lot to struggle successfully against the greatest poets, for she afterwards composed an *Epistle on Conversation*, which appeared at the same time with that of M. Delille, and which has been generally preferred to the work even of a person of such talents. The Abbé Delille's poem *on Conversation*, like all his other works, is deficient in imagination, in plan and in purity of style, and possesses none of the beauties which in his other productions serve to excuse his defects. This poet, whose works are full of false brilliancy, false thoughts, and strange expressions, had some animation and brilliancy of colouring; he was a fine versifier, and no author ever knew better than he the mechanism of alexandrines. He has thrown away all these advantages by composing his poem *on Conversation* in verses of ten syllables; he was not accustomed to that kind of measure, which is the cause of his failure, at least *as a poet;* in this work, in which he has *caricatured* the characters of La Bruyere in endeavouring to imitate them. The best of M. Delille's works is his earliest, the translation of the *Georgics of Virgil*. His poem *Les Jardins* has a radical defect, arising from his ignorance

of the subject; he had never been in England, nor seen the finest gardens laid out in the style which he has described; but the description of the farm was sufficient, and deserved to ensure its success. His *Homme des Champs* is full of charming passages, but it is a failure as a whole His poem on the Imagination is destitute of fancy, which in such a subject is certainly a capital defect. His translation of the Eneid contains some fine pieces, but it is somewhat cold and dull on the whole; his poem of the *Trois Règnes*, is a dry and tiresome work, because the sciences are not fit subjects for poetry;* nevertheless, this poem contains several fine passages; among others, the lines on *a Tempest in the Desert*, the verses *on Coffee*, and a large number of happy thoughts and lines; there are three very remarkable ones in the Episode of the Civil Wars of Florence. viz.

> " Uu vain peuple, à la fois et féroce et volage,
> " Après, l'avoir formé, détruisit son ouvrage,
> " Et, toujours entraîné, croyait toujours choisir."

* With the exception perhaps of Botany; there might be an agreeable poem framed on this subject with the help of some fancy. This task is yet to be performed; Darwin's *Loves of the Plants* is excessively monotonous. (*Note by the Author.*)

The last line is excellent; but the poem is full of bad lines, as for example the following:

"Dodone inconsultée a perdu ses oracles." †

In the same poem the Episode of Mussidor is destitute of ideas, of grace, and even of talent, and throughout the poem is cold. I have forgotten in my enumeration the poem of *Pity*, (a work which might have been so touching, but in which the author has succeeded only in spinning detached passages of a poem,) which without any interest, possesses nevertheless some pretty passages. The same criticism will nearly apply to his translation of Milton. M. Delille was a fine versifier, and a clever and brilliant poet, it is a pity that his taste was not more severe; he has spoiled that of a great number of young poets, who have copied his defects without possessing his talents; but it is impossible to leave him without lauding the profound respect which he has always shown for morals and religion.

My brother, whose wife and daughter were in

† An equally absurd verse has escaped from the author's pen in l' *Enéide*;—

"Né d'un père persan et d'une mère maure."

(Note by the Author.)

Switzerland, suffered a great falling off in his health about the time of my first establishment in my new lodgings; in order to have an opportunity of better attending to him, I entreated him to reside with me; Casimir gave him his room, and slept in an antichamber, on a folding bed, during the two months which my brother passed with me; I had the happiness of seeing him recover his health, after which he left Paris to rejoin his family. During his residence at the Arsenal, he acquainted me with several projects he had to propose to the government; in all the successive memorials he presented, there were always excellent and clever ideas; even the Institute, in several of its reports on his works, has acknowledged them in terms the most honourable to him; but all he wished to do has always been undone by a magical phrase in order to injure him in the eyes of every government; it has been said, that he was a *projector*,* as if all inventors of every description were not always *projectors!* My brother is incapable of intrigue; he contents himself with meditating profoundly, with reflecting, and labouring in silence; but these things will not enable a man to succeed. My brother might have been, if he had chosen

* In orig. *Un homme à projets.*

that career, a most distinguished man of letters; he has received from nature the most fortunate organization; great natural taste for the arts, and talents for musical composition; he has composed airs for several songs which have been greatly liked in company; one of these airs was thought so pretty, that the famous Jarnovitz made variations on it for the violin. My brother commenced a large work, entitled *Henry IV.* of which he was to have composed both the words and the music; the poem which he finished was charming; he composed the music of the two first acts, which he shewed to Méreau (an excellent composer) who was quite astonished at it, and who encouraged him by the highest eulogies to persevere. At this moment, however, some business occurred, which made my brother abandon his opera; afterwards he forgot it entirely; and lastly, in some of his various changes of house, or of country, he lost it. He limited his poetical talents to the composition of charming familiar verses, which he wrote with uncommon promptitude and facility. I will venture to say, that his disposition and his heart are worthy of equal praise with his talents; no one was ever more sincerely obliging, more incapable of hatred or resentment, or more naturally good hearted,

feeling, and generous; no one was ever more trusty or of milder temper in company; we have lived much together, and in the course of our long career, we have never had a quarrel, nor even any thing in the nature of a dispute; we have been as strictly united by the ties of friendship as of blood.*

M. de Treneuil was now attached to the library of the Arsenal; I found in him the most obliging of neighbours, and the most amiable of friends; his place was immediately next to that of M. Ameilhon; if he had at that time held the latter, I never should have quitted the Arsenal.

I had fixed for myself at the Arsenal, occupations which I had marked out and adhered to. The certainty of having all the books I asked for led me to occupy much time in reading, though I had no longer the ardour and the passionate relish for study which I formerly possessed. From the time that Mr. Stone had stolen my extracts, which I had left to my daughter in his care, I had lost that powerful attraction which engages one to augment a large collection which has been formed with much labour and pains; besides, I had read again and again all our good writers,

* I had the misfortune to lose my brother in 1824. *(Note by the Author.)*

and all our best works. I now turned my attention to our curious books, but I no longer felt the pleasure I once had in endeavouring to make entertaining extracts; I felt my courage fail me on reflecting that I had lost in quantity more than sixty printed volumes, all written by my own hand. I confined myself to making some notes, which have since produced a great many manuscripts. However, one very interesting new book I read, the work of M. de Bonald, entitled *La Législation primitive,* a work full of talent, excellent principles, and genius, and written in a style at once brilliant, piquant, and natural. It made the deeper impression upon me, as I knew, like every other person, that the author who in that work displays so much feeling of religion, had at all times professed the same principles, and his noble and virtuous conduct had always been in harmony with his belief. This eulogy is not of a suspicious kind. I have never had the least connection, direct or indirect, with M. de Bonald; I have been even informed, that he had conceived some prejudices against me. My natural indolence, when any sedentary work is not in question, has always prevented me from endeavouring to justify myself to him. I have no need of his friendship in order to admire

him; I even regard it as a satisfaction to render him a piece of justice, which is altogether disinterested.

When M. de Bonald's book appeared, Napoleon had been some years on the throne, and he had had the glory of re-establishing religion and of putting down false philosophy. The disciples of Voltaire and others durst not venture to avow their principles. Voltaire, and all the writers of his party, had lost a great share of their reputation; all their works were sold at low prices, and the worst of speculations would have been to have reprinted them; in short, modern philosophy was universally decried and despised. What proves this fully is the following paragraph, extracted from the *Législation Primitive*, which I shall here literally copy:

"There are many persons who pretend to sense, who refuse either to be convinced of certain truths or to be led into certain ways, and who take the unreasonable resolution of denying what they will not venture to investigate. These persons may have given themselves the title of *esprits forts*, at a time when those who wished to free themselves from a rule troublesome to their self-love and inconvenient to their passions, contented themselves which looked like reasoning; but now, when these matters are more looked into and

rendered palpable by decided experiments, the title of *philosopher* will be more highly valued; it will not be obtained by repeating the sophisms of J. J. Rousseau, the follies of Helvetius, the *logograghs* of the Baron d'Holbach, or the sarcasms of Voltaire."

Such, in fact, was the state of things when M. de Bonald thus expressed himself; it was to have been supposed that the restoration would have annihilated false philosophy, and the contrary is the case. This is a fact which gives rise to many afflicting reflections.

The *Génie du Christianisme*, of M. de Châteaubriand, appeared two or three months before the *Legislation Primitive.* The former work made a great sensation, and deserved to do so; there are many admirable fragments to be found in it, among others, the first cultivation of the lands, and the fine episode of *Atala*; this work has been of great service to religion, and consequently to the monarchy; for legitimate government, like morality, has no solid base but religion. The enemies of M. de Châteaubriand never cease to reproach him with the affectation and obscurity of his style; and they think they do him ample justice by acknowledging that there are *some fine pages in his works*; to be just, they ought to say quite the

contrary; the general structure of his works is always worthy of praise and admiration, and the severest criticism would be unable to discover more than a dozen of hazardous phrases. We might find more in the sublime writings of Bossuet—in the *chefs d'œuvre* of Racine (that is to say in all the pieces of that great poet which are performed) we may find out fifteen or sixteen bad lines; and as many may be discovered in the *Jerusalem Delivered*, the most interesting of all epic poems. M. de Châteaubriand is not susceptible of attack even on this head in his poem of *The Martyrs*, in which he seems to have taken Homer for his model. That work certainly contains great beauty, but it appears to me, that by contrasting Christianity and Mythology, that is to say fable and truth, the author might have presented a picture of the admirable manners of the primitive Christians, of their union, their charity, their disinterestedness, their adoptions, their religious solemnities, which would have formed a striking opposition to the bloody fêtes of Bellona, the infamous Bacchanalian entertainments, the feasts of Flora, and the pagans, to whom the author does not allude. The work of M. de Châteaubriand, which I admire the most is the *Itinéraire de Jérusalem*; that work contains some delicious descriptions

and from beginning to end, it is pervaded by a religious feeling, which is always true and touching; the different effect produced upon the traveller by the sight of the islands of Greece, and by the sight of Jerusalem, are described with perfect truth and in an admirable style. That work would of itself secure to its illustrious author the most brilliant and solid renown.

The following are the relations I had with M. de Châteaubriand. I was not at all acquainted with him when he sent me on its appearance the *Génie du Christianisme*, with a very polite note. The *Génie du Christianisme*, when first published, was at once the subject of the best founded praise and the biterest censure. You might, it is true, cite from the work a few adventurous phrases. I defended M. de Châteaubriand in company, with all the vivacity which marks my character; he had against him all the enemies of religion, and all envious men of letters, who formed a host; and I may say truly, that I acquired many foes personally by defending him. I was, nevertheless, quite aware, and even certain, through M. de Cabre, that M. de Châteaubriand was quite of a different feeling towards me; but this never prevented me from conducting myself in the same way with regard to him, or from writing to

the same to the emperor, at a time when he was much irritated against him I showed this letter to M. de Cabre, who thought it so full of interest in M. de Châteaubriand, that he begged me to allow him to show it to Madame de Laborde; I gave it him, begging him to say to her at the same time, that I had charged him (which was true) to seal the letter as soon as she had read it, and then to send it to M. de Lavalette, who managed my correspondence with the emperor; so that my conduct in the business is sufficiently clear. M. de Châteaubriand was not allowed to remain ignorant of the matter, and he thought himself obliged to call and thank me. He remained with me on this occasion a considerable time; we were *tête-à-tête*, and I received him as politely as I could; without any kind of explanation, we spoke on literary subjects; he expressed himself with remarkable simplicity and modesty; he appeared to me extremely amiable, and he has in reality more talent and wit than is necessary in order to be so.* I have since written eulogies of him,

When I wrote this, such were our respective relations; the Viscount de Châteaubriand has since shown me much kindness, and I shall always preserve a sincere attachment for a person who unites religious feelings to such high talents.—*(Note by the Author.)*

without adding to them a single word of criticism, in several of my works, and I have always held a language corresponding with such conduct. I have never been able to endure to hear any accusation of hypocrisy made against M. de Châteaubriand; first, because no one has a right to say that an author does not think as he writes; and next because one must have no feeling of what is true, if he is not persuaded thnt M. de Châteaubriand has written in a spirit of good faith, the finest parts of his works upon religion and the whole of his *Itinerary*. The writer of *Atala*—the person who, when at sea, and addressing himself to God, said "*Jamais je ne fus plus troublé de ta grandeur!*" he who has so admirably described the impression which he felt at the sight of Jerusalem—can never be a hypocrite. I must not be understood to speak of the episode of *René*; this is a brief romance, of which the conception is quite false and immoral; a young person perfectly pure and pious, could never have experienced a passion so monstrous.

Since I am mentioning literature in the present work, I ought to consecrate an article in it to Madame de Staël. I have never criticized her in my works, but because in hers she has openly attacked both morals and religion. Had it not been

for this, I should have only censured in general the incorrectness and obscurity of her style, but I should never have cited any part of the absurd phrases which are so plentifully scattered through her writings. I have never written these criticisms without observing all the rules of politeness, and without speaking with esteem of her person and her character. Madame de Staël had the misfortune to admire whatever was turgid, antithetical, and nonsensical. The bloated style of M. Thomas was to her, from her earliest youth, the perfection of eloquence. She joined to this misfortune, that of having always neglected the writers of the brilliant age of Louis XIV.; she had little solid information, and had never made a serious study of the French language, of which she did not even know the commonest rules, as may be seen in her first works, and in many parts of her later ones. Thus, she wrote—*qu'il est doux d'aimer et de l'être**—and she frequently puts masculine nouns in the feminine gender; for instance, I pointed out in one of my printed critiques upon her, that she ought to have said *un charmant épisode*, not *une charmante épisode*. The work which stamped the reputation of Madame

* Eloge de J. J. Rousseau.

de Staël was that entitled *Des l'Influence des Passions sur les Nations et sur les Individus.* Its object is to prove the utility of the passions: this was the doctrine of the Encyclopedists, who were constantly about Madame de Staël both in her infancy and youth. Her memory must not be charged with these pernicious principles, which she had imbibed from her cradle. Madame Necker, her mother, was a philosopher without knowing it: M. Necker was an antiphilosopher, from the uprightness of his character, but a philosopher, through the falseness of his judgment; he combatted sincerely the impiety of his sect, but adopted many errors which might serve as a basis to irreligion: for it is to be remarked, that the plots of the modern philosophers are so well laid, that they have deceived the understandings of a great number whose hearts they could not corrupt. It is in that work of Madame de Staël, which I have just cited, that she pronounces the highest eulogy on suicide, styling this crime in words at length, *a sublime act.* She exclaims, "How fortunate it is that all wicked men are incapable of performing so sublime a deed!" I replied at the time, that I thought it strange she should have forgotten that the most wicked men, and the most

dishonoured names in history have been suicides—*Judas, Sardanapalus, Messalina,* and *Nero.* For the sake of morality, religion, and literature, I have turned into ridicule many sentiments and phrases in the works of Madame de Staël, especially in my novel, entitled *La Femme Philosophe:* and afterwards in the *Influence of women upon French literature.* These critiques (though accompanied by much praise,) have rendered her my enemy.* However, in some respects, she has profited by them; she has publicly acknowledged since the restoration, that she repented of, and disavowed all she had written upon suicide; so I hope, that in a second edition, published twenty-three years after the first, of *the Influence of the Passions,* and which has appeared since the death of Madame de Staël, her panegyric on suicide has been withdrawn. I have also been of some use to Madame de Staël in point of style. It is certain, that since the publication of the *Femme Philosophe,* there has been much less affectation

* With an excellent house, and much talent and celebrity, it is easy to obtain many partisans. For my part, I have always been exceedingly offended when any one depreciated the talents of Madame de Staël, in order to flatter me, and I can sincerely say, that I have never allowed it. I confess, my pride had as much to do with this as my generosity.—(*Note by the Author.*)

in her mode of writing. Nevertheless, in her work on Germany, there are several phrases, and even paragraphs which are incomprehensible in the ideas, the surprising assemblage of words which ought never to come together, and the sense, which the author herself could not possibly have comprehended; for example, the following passage:—

"In order to conceive the true grandeur of Lyric poetry, we must wander in a reverie into the regions of ether, and forgetting the sounds of the earth, listen to the harmonies of heaven, and consider the universe as the symbol of the emotions of the soul. . . . The poet feels his heart beat for a celestial happiness, which traverses like lightning the glooms of fate." (Volume iii.)

The first of Madame de Stael's novels, Delphine, met with no success, and indeed was quite unworthy of it. That of *Corinne*, like all the other writings of Madame de Staël, was not successful in point of sale: for it is remarkable, that in spite of all the efforts of her friends, she never could procure the sale of an edition of any of her works in a few days. Her second novel, *Corinne*, with all its faults of style, which the author has always retained, passes for her best work; but it wants invention, probability, and interest. The heroine,

who loves so passionately, is neither attached to her country nor her family; she braves all received usages and all notions of propriety; she gives herself up to a furious passion, and I must confess I regard it as inexcusable, to create heroines in order to describe them as extravagant, and then to propose them to us as models worthy of our entire admiration. In this work, Corinne is represented to us as prostrating herself on the shore before her lover, and rising with a scratched forehead. It has been discovered, that she imitated in this novel a scene in one of my romances, where my heroine is made to wander in despair through the fields and woods, and return home pale, trembling, frozen, and overwhelmed with misery. It was not undesignedly that I placed this scene in winter. If, in such a situation, my heroine had wandered about the country in summer, under a burning sun, she must have returned perspiring and flushed, and could have offered no idea to the mind but that of a Bacchante. Madame de Staël, in changing the scene, has also changed the season; the adventure takes place at Naples, during the fervours of a thirsty summer. In this work are to be found, besides a continual want of taste, the most singular ideas: thus we see Corinne, who

from time to time experiences some religious feelings, goes to pray in the chapel of the Virgin, and confide to her the torments of her flame, "because, (says she,) a *woman* [she speaks of the Holy Virgin !] must feel a natural compassion for the afflictions of the heart." Yet this work presents many passages worthy of praise; the improvisations of Corinna, however, required a fine style, which is never discoverable in them; they want both eloquence and ideas.

Towards the close of her life, Madame de Staël had a splendid house at Paris, and a large fortune; she had aided in the restoration, which fairly ensured her the respects and attentions of the royalists; and she affected the most liberal principles, and received the chiefs of that party at stated hours. Thus, at the end of her career, she had partisans and praisers among all parties; she speaks well of them all in her posthumous work which has been praised by the liberals with the most inconceivable exaggeration. For example, they laud excessively the phrase in which Henry is styled *the most French* of all our kings; a phrase which is borrowed from the portrait of this monarch drawn by me in my *History of Henry the Great*. I venture to say, that my phrase, which

expressed the same idea, and of which no journalist had ever spoken, was better turned than that of Madame de Staël.

Literary works never reach posterity with honour but when they possess acknowledged and incontestable beauty of style. Seneca, in spite of his superior talents, which were eminently brilliant, and the most elevated sentiments, has never been a classic author.

Madame de Staël will always rank among celebrated women, but her productions will not rank among our classical works, though there is often a superior mind to be discovered in them. I have always regretted that a mind such as her's was not better cultivated and better directed, and that she did not derive her notions in literature from a better school; the enthusiasm, *sur parole*, of the first years of her youth, has excited a melancholy influence on her literary existence. I had often seen Madame de Staël at her mother's before her marriage; she then discovered great cleverness, but at the same time an uneasy vivacity.

Madame Necker often brought her daughter to me while at Belle-Chasse; there was always something exaggerated in her demonstrations of feeling, but never any thing like falsehood. She was sincere in her errors and in her emphasis, and

nothing can be a better excuse for her bad system and her bad taste, both in her conversation and in her writings. She has often made me experience a sentiment of which she never suspected me: often when I thought of her, I have regretted sincerely that she had not been my daughter or my pupil; I should then have given her good literary principles, just ideas, and unaffected manners; with such an education, joined to her own talents, and her generous mind, she would have been an accomplished person, and the first female author of our days.

The journals were not as numerous at the time that I inhabited the Arsenal as they now are, when the spirit of party and of politics sometimes render their judgments on literary works so unjust. I was in the habit of reading the *Journal de Paris*, and the *Journal de l'Empire*. Geoffroy* was still alive; he had talents, but he has been far too highly praised as a critic. Incapable of judging of works of sentiment, he spoke of them erro-

* The dramatic critic. His notices are often unjust and ill-natured, but almost always clever and piquant. He wrote the greater part of his critiques in the *Journal des Debats;* but he degraded his pen by making a trade of his praises, and showered all kinds of abuse upon those who refused to purchase his laudation.—(*Note by the Editor.*)

neously, and sometimes absurdly. He has never said any thing against me; he has never spoken of my works but favourably; therefore my opinion of him is quite impartial. He has written many excellent articles in his journal, but he has also written many which are exceedingly bad; his extreme partiality perpetually perverted his judgment. His style was in general piquant; there was some pleasantry in his manner, but there was no variety. He has never joined serious and solid arguments with his wit, nor lauded with good taste; he wanted tact, and was always in extremes He has often spoken grossly of Madame de Staël, and unjustly of Voltaire's tragedies; he said of the emperor, that *it would be atheism to deny his great qualities;* no one ever carried flattery further than he did, or was less sparing of the bitterest and most abusive criticism.

I have never in my life meditated so much on what I read as I did at this time; I read all the old authors, not only of the age of Louis XIV., but that which preceded it; I particularly endeavoured, in studying the progress of the French language, to ascertain what were the motives that had led to the rejection of the old words, and old modes of speech, and the introduction of our new methods of expression, and the new turns of which

a language was composed, which is so rich in *chefs-d'œuvre*. I had not till this time studied any thing relating to this subject, but the exact propriety of words, and harmony of the language; Racine in verse, and Massillon and Buffon in prose, have in this respect been my principal masters; but the new study I had undertaken, possessed to me a particular charm; it was necessary to penetrate into and divine the meanings of the greatest writers we have had; this exercise pleased my imagination, flattered my self-love, and piqued my curiosity. It seemed a fine thing to be initiated into such secrets; and from all I have been able to discover on the subject, I am led to think there is always something moral, delicate, or ingenious in the changes or retentions which have been made; for instance, I have endeavoured to find out why, when we banish from poetical language words and expressions which are only used in familiar speech, and which are in no way disagreeable in themselves, we have nevertheless retained several ignoble words, which present the most disgusting images, such as *boue, fange, fumier;* and I have discovered that the language of an elevated mind and heart required the retention of these words, in order to be able, by odious comparisons, to depreciate the better what is vile,

and discover for all kinds of mean vices, the last degree of contempt. If I were to detail all my remarks on this subject, I should have to write a volume; I shall content myself with saying, that this study has proved to me that the fixation of a fine language is the fruit and the work of the most ingenious, sound, and deep reflections, and the purest taste.

Eight or ten months before I left the Arsenal, Casimir went to Vienna, where he met with the utmost success of all kinds: he there saw frequently the Prince de Ligne, to whom I had given him a letter, and who in writing to me, and speaking of him said, he thought him *an accomplished young man*. Casimir not having yet been confirmed, received that sacrament at Vienna; and, agreeably to the custom of that country, he had a godfather: this was the Prince de Ligne. Another custom of the same country authorises a godfather to give his godson one of the family names; accordingly, the Prince de Ligne gave Casimir his, which is not *de Ligne* but *De la Morald*, which Casimir had thenceforth the right to bear on all occasions. He was confirmed with great pomp by the Archbishop of Vienna. Casimir performed at Vienna a very handsome action: Madame Larcher,

...BARAJA SEREO...

an interesting person, full of talent, and who played on the violin with surprising skill for a woman and an amateur, lost all at once a considerable fortune, without any fault of her own. She was advised to go to Vienna, in order to turn her talents to account; but, she knew nobody there. She made no money, and was sunk in the utmost embarrassments: in this extremity she had recourse to Casimir, who immediately proposed to her a concert for her own benefit, promising to perform in it, and permitting her to announce him. This announcement had the desired effect; the theatre was filled, and Madame Larcher delivered from her distressing situation.

I could quote many traits of this description in Casimir, but I shall content myself with one more. He had the good fortune to procure, through one of his female friends, an excellent place with an illustrious Polish lady, for Madame Robadet, of whom I have already spoken. He attached so much value to this favour, that he thought himself bound to acknowledge the kindness of his friend, by giving her daughter gratuitously eighteen months lessons on the harp.

During Casimir's absence, I had with me a very clever and estimable person, called Madame Rous-

sel,* whom I specially employed in the education of Alfred, with whose behaviour I had every reason to be pleased, on account of his mildness, docility, and goodness of heart. He began to play very prettily on the harp: his address and dexterity in every respect were truly extraordinary. Casimir had given him an enormous quantity of playthings; when they were broken, he mended them again, or made others as well as the best workman could have done: he has since cultivated that talent, which has now become incomparable, as well as his talent for mechanics. From the age of fourteen or fifteen, it was he who mended, (and admirably,) all my most complicated locks, and who regulated all my clocks, with the mechanism of which he was so well acquainted, that he succeeded in making one with his own hands, without taking a single lesson from any watchmaker. He afterwards made without any advice or instruction a repeating watch, and a handsome clock for my grandson, of which he gilt and bronzed, himself, all the ornaments.

During my residence at the Arsenal, I passed three summers in the country with Casimir and

* She has since separated from me for her own advantage, as I procured her an excellent place in Italy, which she has since lost through the revolutions of that country.—*(Note by the Author.)*

Alfred; the one with Madame de Brady, at the château of Rebrechien, near Orleans: the other with Madame du Brosseron, at Sorel; and the third at Sillery. I could not again view the scenes where I had passed the happiest years of my early youth, without profound emotion. I found the estate deplorably changed: the superb woods of Meseril had been cut down, as were the fir-trees in the court. A wing of the château, which contained the handsome gallery and the chapel, had been thrown down; the delicious isles and the charming fabrics, which had been reared on their surface, by the polite attention of M. de Genlis, were destroyed, and now presented only a view of melancholy marshes: the rest of the château was deprived of its furniture. The handsome floors on the ground story, which had been new laid with precious woods by the Marechale D'Etrée, had been torn up by revolutionary fury, because on them were represented coats of arms, and the truncheon of a French marshal. I saw nothing to give me pleasure, but the room in which Henry IV. had slept three nights: all the ancient furniture was still standing; the crimson damask which covered them was so old and decayed as not to have tempted the cupidity of the revolutionists. I experienced no other feelings than those of melancholy, while

in this residence, formerly so handsome and so brilliant—which a celebrated Englishman, (Mr. Young,) in his journey through France before the revolution, characterises by saying, that he had seen nothing in France like Sillery. I caused to be performed in the parish church, a funeral service for my husband, as magnificently as such a thing can be done in a village. All the curates of the environs were present, and in order to have them all together, it was necessary to have the service celebrated on a working day. It was announced from the pulpit, and not a single peasant was absent. Even old and infirm men were led to the ceremony; and sick persons left their beds for the first time, in order to render that homage of their gratitude to the memory of their beneficent lord, whom they formerly loved so well! The church was so full, that part of the peasants could not get in, but remained under the porch, and conabout the church. All the peasants without exception subscribed something for the poor, and consented besides to lose the value of half a day's work: what academical discourse is equivalent to a eulogy like this!

In the mean time at the Arsenal, the water having soaked through the old walls, there happened several accidents, which might have proved

fatal: in the first place, the infiltration caused an excessive humidity in my bed-room: next, several parts of the wall decayed; among others, a window frame, which fell on Madame Roussel, and nearly killed her: however, by a miracle of good fortune, she was not wounded; and it is equally surprising, that during the last six months I lived in these rooms, I never had the rheumatism. At length I requested that the necessary repairs should be made; but M. Ameilhon, with his accustomed good-nature, persuaded the ministers that the expense would amount to more than fifteen thousand francs: the whole might have been accomplished for one hundred louis. I was informed that the library did not possess the necessary funds; so it became necessary for me to resolve on quitting the Arsenal. As the government had undertaken to lodge me during the remainder of my life, and as it had no lodging then disposable which might have suited me, I thought I was entitled to demand an equivalent in money; and with my usual moderation, I only asked for eight thousand francs, though I knew I could not be commodiously lodged for less than ten or twelve thousand francs. I immediately received the eight thousand francs, and as my lodging daily became more threatening and perilous, I quitted it with all pos-

sible haste. The sensations I experienced on quitting the Arsenal, easily accounted to me for the feelings which bind us to our country. The Arsenal in which I had lived for nine years, in spite of all the vexations I had undergone in it, had to me become a sort of country. All feeling hearts soon attach themselves more or less to the place which they have long inhabited; habit in certain things, is only insipid to persons of bad hearts and light heads, who always fancy they must find some advantages in change. I quitted the Arsenal with a feeling of pain, of which the bitterness was augmented by my separation from Madame Roussel, who at this time was going to Italy. Alfred, who was sincerely attached to her, burst into tears when he took his farewell of her. I was obliged to take, for want of a better, a very inconvenient lodging in the same part of the town, Rue des Lions: it was sufficiently large and on the first floor; but Gothic, absurdly arranged, and extremely unhealthy on account of its dampness.

However, I passed here some very agreeable evenings, thanks to Messieurs d'Estournel, Brifaut, and de Treneuil, who came to see me every Saturday evening. Each of them read to me a little unpublished fragment, which was always in verse. I read to them in return some pieces in

prose. These readings were terminated by a very animated conversation, which was kept up frequently till midnight. This lasted all the winter.

I was living in the Rue des Lions, when M. Ameilhon got a terrible fall on the great staircase of the Arsenal. In spite of the advice of his attentive and virtuous wife, he always insisted on walking alone; he was very old. Assistance was immediately procured, and he was conveyed to his bed in a dying state, and his life was despaired of. I sent every day to inquire how he was; he was informed of this, and appeared touched by it. One day he sent word by my servant, that he remembered with uneasiness our little quarrels at the Arsenal, and begged my pardon for his share in them; this proof of repentance affected me much; he died a few days after. He was an odd and morose person, but he had a great deal of information, and some excellent qualities.

I wrote a work on common plants, for the use of young persons; it is impossible to put into their hands those commonly sold, because they are filled with details on the most infamous diseases. In mine, I suppressed all these details, and tried to supply their place by something of an agreeable or moral kind; in short, I neglected no pains or research which could tend to give interest

to this work, or render it useful to mothers of families, or their daughters.

I gave this work to M. Barrois, without making any engagement with him in writing. I have received no acknowledgment, but the work has never appeared; I do not know for what purpose M. Barrois retains it. I have several letters of his in my possession, which prove that several years have elapsed since it was to have been published. As I have reason on many accounts to esteem M. Barrois, I am unwilling to do any thing that might be disagreeable to him; I have taken no steps in the affair; but I regret, the suppression of that work, which M. Correa, a very celebrated Portuguese botanist, pronounced to be exceedingly useful to young people, in every point of view. M. Correa had even the goodness to make two or three additions to the work, of exotic plants unknown to me. I have no copy of the work, but only a few fragments of it. The manuscript given to M. Barrois, was in the hand writing of a young Corsican of my acquaintance, nephew of the Count de Brady, who copied the fragments I have preserved. The rest was written under my dictation.

On my arrival at Paris, I experienced treatment which surprised me extremely, from a book-

seller introduced to me by my friend, M. Pieyre, on the subject of a new edition of the *Rival Mothers*, with the addition of a third volume; the edition was sold in the course of eight days. I had not made any written agreement, and the bookseller flatly refused to pay me; I had no means of forcing him by law to keep his engagements. I never experienced any thing like this in my transactions with Maradan; I always found him very upright and exact; to be sure, he has made many advantageous bargains with me, but this was with my own consent, and because I esteemed him. In the Rue des Lions, I wrote my *Notes on La Bruyère*: the first edition, of which I did not read the proofs, was full of errors; the miserable notes of Lacoste had been left, which were inserted below the text, while mine were placed at the end of the volume, and all the piquant titles of the chapters were suppressed. These absurdities hurt the sale of the edition, which did not go off so fast as all my other works had done. However, it was generally agreed that my remarks were just, and might prove useful to the young. In the Rue des Lions, I also formed the plan of my little poem, called *The Youth of Moses, or the Shepherds of Madian*. It was M. Alibert who entreated me to take this subject;

I published the poem some months afterwards; Cardinal Maury, who was a judge of style, was enchanted with the piece; he said it was the best written of all my works—an opinion in which I concur.

M. Horace Vernet had the goodness to design an engraving for the second edition, representing one of the most interesting scenes in the poem. You discover all his talent in that charming print, and I found in it a proof of his friendship which touched me deeply. My attachment to him and his amiable wife has never varied.

I did not publish this work with Maradan, because, in order to oblige Madame de Bon, I had agreed with a bookseller with whom she was in treaty for the translation of an English novel. I gave him *Moses* almost for nothing, on condition that he would purchase Madame de Bon's translation at the price she demanded for it.

I had been about a year in the Rue des Lions, when Casimir returned from Vienna. It was at this time that I sold the absolute property of all my works, a property of which I had clearly a right to dispose, without feeling any scruple, seeing I had abandoned without reserve to my family, from the time of quitting France, my dowry, and all other rights, without demanding a farthing.

A few months after Casimir's return from Vienna, we fixed ourselves in very handsome apartments in the *Rue Helvetius*, called before the revolution the *Rue Sainte Anne*. I had the satisfaction, the very day after the restoration, of having the name of the philosopher effaced, and that of the saint replaced. My friend, M. de Charbonnières, was also the friend of the Prefect of Paris: my first feeling, on the king's return, was to express to M. de Charbonnières my desire of banishing Helvetius from our street: M. de Charbonnières easily obtained that favour of the prefect, and I soon had the pleasure of seeing scratched out the name of the author of a work, pernicious and detestable in all respects. I went into the street on purpose to witness the agreeable spectacle, and since that moment I have never cast my eyes on the corner of the street, nor read the sweet and sacred name which I had caused to be traced there, without feeling the most pleasing emotions.

I had published my *Historical and Literary Botany*, a work containing the researches of thirty years; but as I had only spoken generally on the plants mentioned in the Bible, and those which bear the names of existing persons, I wrote for my private amusement, a manuscript work on these plants under the title of *The Eight Herbals:*

in consequence, I had a quarto blank book bound in morocco, in which I painted four Herbals, forming the first volume of the eight, which I intended to compose. These four Herbals are—*The Sacred Herbal*, *The Herbal of Gratitude and Friendship*, *The Heraldic Herbal*, comprising all the French coats of arms in which there are vegetables, together with those antique devices of which plants form the subject; lastly *The Golden Herbal*, in which I have placed all the fruits of gold mentioned in history. In ancient times it was a custom,—a kind of magnificence very common among sovereigns and other high personages, to have in their palaces a gallery or artificial garden filled with golden plants, which they sent to each other in presents. A thousand dissertations have been written to discover the allegorical sense of the fable of the Hesperides and the golden apples: some have pretended they were merely oranges, others sheep, the golden apples expressing their value in commerce: I think I have proved in a brief dissertation, which was long ago printed, that the golden apples of the Hesperides were in fact nothing but apples of gold. I have painted in my *Golden Herbal* with gold all my representations of the plants made of this metal, of which I found the details in history; the number is con-

siderable. In this book I have written under each plant the explanatory text, and embellished the whole with vignettes. I have painted all the plants with a careful accuracy, which has been lauded by all the artists who have seen them; there are also in the work some unpublished verses of mine. This large book, magnificently bound, is certainly one of the most curious and most precious manuscripts existing. As I could not work at this undertaking daily, I took several years to finish it; I completed it on a very remarkable day—that on which the allies entered Paris, when every one was in the most terrible alarm.* I am now engaged on a second volume,† which will finish the work; I shall give an account of it hereafter. Besides the work of which I have just spoken, I have amused myself with composing and painting one hundred and sixty devices taken from the vegetable kingdom.‡ I venture to say that these devices are perfectly accurate; there are no situations or sentiments which they do not express, and the subjects represented deserve to be engraved in a volume. Lastly, since the re-

* This now belongs to the king, and is in his private library.

† This volume is commenced under the title of a supplement or continuation, but I have not yet been able to finish it.

‡ A work which is now in England.—(*Notes by the Author.*)

storation, I have written for the pretty pack of cards invented by M. Athalin, about five hundred lines: I wrote them with my own hand on the backs of the cards: I have never in my own opinion written more flowing and agreeable verses: I gave this pack of cards to Casimir. It was in my apartments in the Rue Sainte Anne that the marriage of Casimir was solemnized; he married the daughter of M. Carret, *Mâitre des Comtes.* Casimir loved Mademoiselle Carret, and she deserved all his affection, by her talents, her virtues, and her noble and beautiful air and face.

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